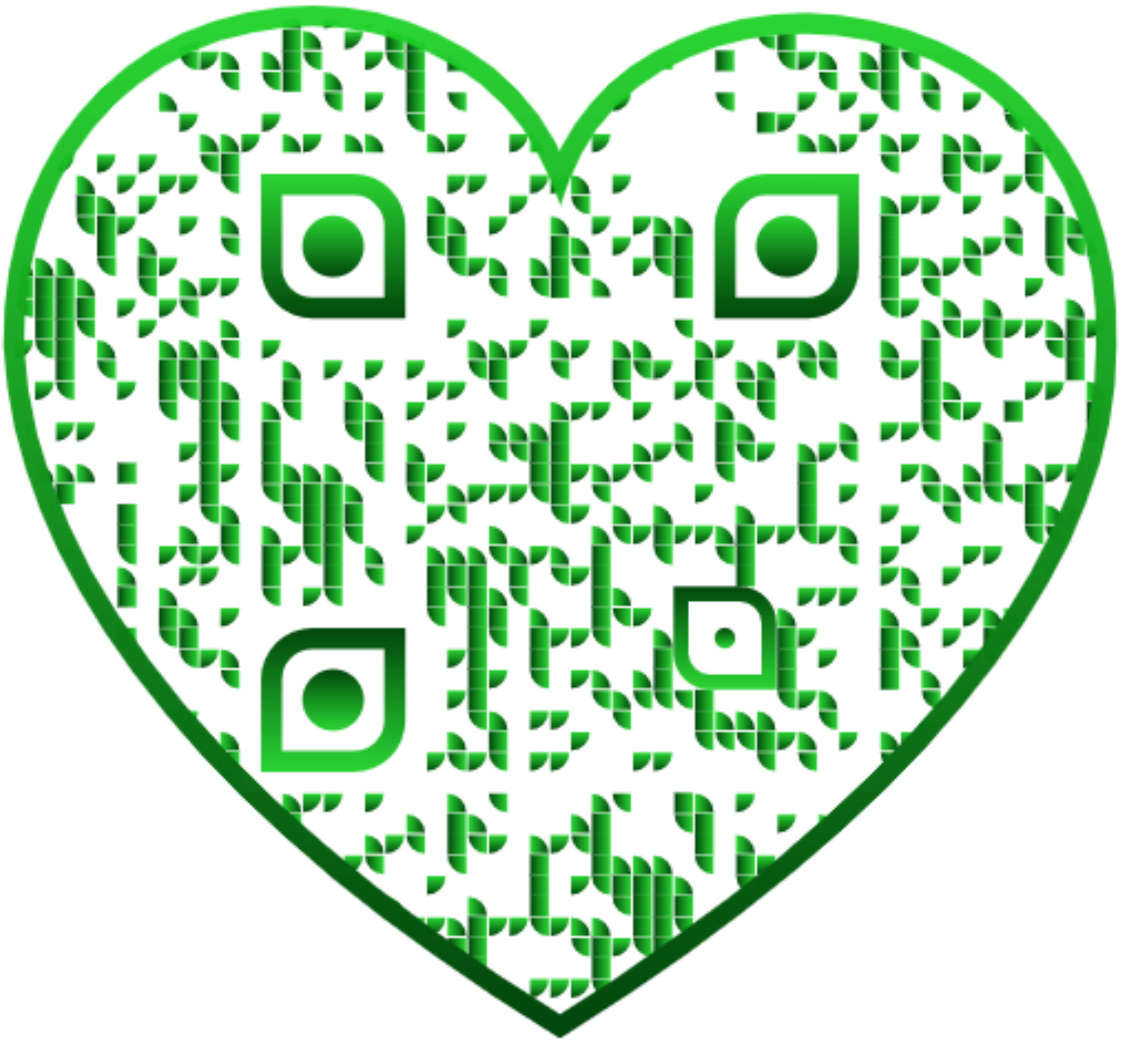
STUDIES IN POLTERGEISTS, OBSESSION, & POSSESSION

INSTITUTE FOR HERMETIC STUDIES MONOGRAPH SERIES

MARK STAVISH



The Institute for Hermetic Studies
Monograph Series # 6

Studies
in
Poltergeists, Obsession, & Possession

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with
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Introduction

The role of communication between the various levels of beings (primarily spirits and humans) has been well documented since the earliest of times. The origin of shamanic practices —with their principal trade in "trafficking with spirits" to gain information or power, or to execute an action at a distance—is so old as to be unidentifiable. For as long as we have existed, humans have sought to communicate and interact with the invisible and its varied inhabitants. However, as Swedenborg, possibly the greatest living seer of the eighteenth century—and certainly the greatest in Western history—clearly stated: spirits "lie."

The cause and purpose of these deceptions are not clear. Yet all we need do is look at the case of Dr. John Dee and his associate Edward Kelley to confirm in written detail that spirits lie. Despite being paid to skry for Dee, Kelley increasingly sought to distance himself and Dee from their communications with the "angels," as he questioned their intent. In the end, Dee lost his fame, fortune, vast library, and marriage (the spirits encouraged wife-swapping between the two men); even many of the records of his congress with the "angels" were accidentally destroyed. So how is it that illiterate primitive shamans, in the past as well as around

the world today, are able to interact with and navigate the spirit world, yet Dee, the most brilliant man in Europe in the sixteenth century, was essentially hoodwinked?

The answer is not precise; but what *is* clear is that there are many dimensions to the universe we exist in and many types of residents as well. Several Asian schools, particularly those in direct descent from Central Asian shamanism (Bön and Taoism) state that there are six classes of beings, each occupying their place in the hierarchy of the cosmos. These are (from top to bottom):

1. the gods,
2. demigods (Asuras/Demons/Titans),
3. humans,
4. animals,
5. ghosts, and
6. those who occupy the hot and cold hell realms.

Some schools include a seventh class, those of the *nagas*, specifically serpent beings, or elemental beings of nature in general. It is interesting that the demigods are known as Asuras, which is also a class of *djinn* among Arabic Muslims, and considered demonic. Another translation for Asura is "demon" in some Tibetan practices. Clearly some level of spiritual culture transfer was taking place along the Silk Road.

When we examine the spiritual culture of Europe during Dee's experiments, we see that not only is there hostility and very real danger in attempting to communicate with spirits—people were imprisoned, tortured, and even killed for it—but that the dominant spiritual authorities (Christian churches in general; the Roman Catholic Church in particular) had

no real room for them in their cosmology. The Christian cosmology was basically dualistic: angels above, demons below and all around, and humanity between the two. The wider folk context had places for ghosts, elemental spirits, and various types of beings. Much of this was written about in Cornelius Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, but it was painfully absent from the wider theological framework.[1]

It is this same framework that also provided the basis for most of the occult practices of the period. It is only with the widespread introduction of Jewish mysticism or Kabbalah into the mix that we see a more coherent system for spirit communication. However, even here we see an emphasis on man as instigator, God as overseer, and angels or demons as the party with whom the communication is taking place. Only in the commentaries and on the folk level do we see a wider community of spiritual beings discussed and interacted with, often regularly. For this reason, we see "witchcraft" as the domain where folk medicine, spellcasting, and interaction with spirits is found—in short, the "shamanism" of the West, the practical spirituality of the common person. Sometimes this folk magic is connected to the wider spiritual authorities, as in Asia where the role of shaman was in part absorbed into the lay practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism (*Ngagpa*) or in Taoism where the priest is first and foremost an exorcist.

However, often it was not connected, and spiritual practices in the West developed along three specific and frequently separate lines: (1) mainstream churches; (2) esoteric and occult lines with their publications and secret societies; and

[1] See Mark Stavish, *Mercury's Children: Shamanic and Hermetic Practices* (IHS Monograph Series # 5: CreateSpace, 2016) for more information.

(3) folk practices that were a combination of these two, along with the oral traditions of folklore. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this pattern was interrupted by the introduction of Spiritualism (later called "channeling") to the popular culture (and with it the formation of various societies for the scientific research of psychic phenomena), but neither of these have produced a cohesive theory and practice comparable to those of shamanism, witchcraft, or the ritual magic of occultism. In short, a comprehensive and widespread ability to interact with spirits has been non-existent in the West for nearly 1500 years, and this has caused tremendous problems for individuals, as well as for our culture.

On the bright side, many people are currently interested in communicating with the invisible. Since this is often without a framework and guidance from someone with experience, the warning of Swedenborg must be kept in mind, as the possibility for self-delusion and being misled can be extremely high. For this reason I have drawn similarities between the current state of paranormal research—particularly the media explosion in ghost-hunting shows—and UFO research from just a few years ago. In fact, many of the same people move back and forth between these two areas of extreme communication with the unknown. To speak to this I have chosen the works of Jacques Vallée, not only because of his impeccable scientific credentials, but also because of his authority in UFO research and personal interest in Hermeticism. I have never met Vallée, but I do know several people who have, and they were all impressed by his accessibility and knowledge.

The notion of manipulation by the spirits which we see in John Dee and Edward Kelley's experiences with the Enochian

skrying sessions is also found within the records of traditional exorcisms. Manipulation is the name of the game, and from the study of spirits we learn one thing: *know and understand your own mind*; if you do not, someone else will, and they will in general *not* have your best interests at heart. It is here that we enter into the domain of "conspiracy theory," but alas, in this context, it is no theory. Understanding the human mind, parapsychological research, UFOs, and mind control—be it of the individual or the masses—are all one interconnected loop. Vance Packard, a Pennsylvania native, brought this to our attention in the 1950s and I was fortunate enough to meet his son, Vance Packard, Jr., in January 2015 at an event held at the Circle Center for the Arts, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The introduction occurred just prior to my wife Andrea Nerozzi's participation in an exhibition of Tibetan art being sponsored by the Wyoming Valley Art League. Additional pieces were graciously on loan from the collection of Prof. Steven Davies, Department of Religious Studies, Misericordia University. Dr. Davies is known for studies on Gnosticism, and his translation of and commentary on the Gospel of Thomas in particular.

As for individual and mass manipulation, I do not want to delve too deeply into it—I only wish to state that it *is* a reality, not confined to either the "unknown beings" with which this monograph is concerned or their physical devotees and challengers. Again, there is a local connection that cannot be ignored. Candy Jones, war-time pin-up girl, fashion model, and "local girl done good" was a name from my childhood, not for her stunning beauty, but for making history as the principal figure in a story that would thrust her into the limelight again. Candy Jones was a spy, and

not just any spy: she claimed to have been part of a Central Intelligence Agency mind control program. While there was and still is controversy around her claims, they were made prior to the discovery of the existence of Project MK-Ultra in 1975 during the Church Committee Congressional Hearings and the President Gerald Ford Commission investigating CIA activities within the United States. Her story was published in 1976 in the book *The Control of Candy Jones* by Donald Bain.[2] Maybe that is what put me on a path where, in the mid-1980s—at McGill University no less (site of previous MK-Ultra experiments)—I briefly met Ingo Swann (1933-2013) and Andrija Puharich (1918-1995) at the annual August conference of the Spiritual Science Fellowship–International Institute of Integral Human Sciences (SSF-IIIHS). Swann is well known for his work on remote viewing with Russell Targ at the Stanford Research Institute, a program that would attract funding from the CIA. Puharich is known for his discovery and promotion of Israeli psychic and entertainer Uri Geller; he also worked on various psychic research and mind control programs for the CIA and military. I attended the conference with several friends, including Peter Roche de Coppens, Professor of Sociology at East Stroudsburg University (ESU) and author of several books on esoteric Christianity, whose main focus was spirituality and society.

Even Pulitzer Prize Award-winning playwright and actor Jason Miller (1939-2001), who played Father Damien Karras in the movie adaptation of *The Exorcist* (1973), was a lifelong resident of Scranton and an alumnus of the Jesuit-run Scranton University. You will also shortly see that the famous "Rain Man" Case of demonic possession took place

[2]Chicago: Playboy Press, 1976.

in nearby Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

As they say, there must be something in the water.

It would be irresponsible of me if I allowed this monograph to go to print without mentioning what a strange journey it has been bringing it to completion. Unknown to our Series Editor Alfred DeStefano, this monograph was next in line for publication. I had decided that it went well with our previous one on shamanism. Around the time I was making this decision he experienced an unexplained and catastrophic collapse of the large monitor he uses for laying out these books. His monitor literally fell off the desk it was sitting on. The following day a major power surge resulted in a crashed computer *and backup drive*—taking with it the most recent and complete version of *Words of My Teachers* (IHS Study Guide Series, Vol. IV) and setting him back nearly two months. For myself, the period leading up to completing this manuscript has been filled with a near-endless stream of annoyances to actual outright assaults directed at this and related projects, questioning their ultimate value and my character for having undertaken them. One night, as I was preparing the final text for publication (during the dark of the moon for those who understand its implications in magic and astrology), I could clearly hear voices behind me and to my left, right behind my ear. This is the location of a psychic center not well known in the West, but clearly illustrated in Tibetan iconography. Powerful chills coursed up and down my spine. Regardless, I ignored it and continued with the work before me.

Which brings me to what Jean Dubuis once stated at a conference held outside of Wheaton, Illinois, by the Philosophers of Nature (PON): "We had a very difficult time getting

here, so what we are doing must be important." The same, it appears, is true for us. We had many difficulties in getting here, and desire that it should have not been in vain—tread this world carefully.

Maybe more importantly we should echo the words of Dr. Stephen Skinner, in his Preface to *The Complete Enochian Dictionary* by Donald C. Laycock, as it is applicable to all areas of psychic and interdimensional research:

> The Enochian system is much more than just the books written about it. It is one of the most complex bridges ever built between this world and the world of dæmons, spirits, and angels, a piece of spiritual engineering created by one of the most brilliant minds of his age. As such it deserves to be traversed with care. But as it was filtered through the tricky mind of Dee's mercurial skryer Edward Kelley, this path can easily become the path of the Fool.[3]

The following information first appeared in several articles posted in VOXHERMES, the electronic newsletter for the Institute for Hermetic Studies starting in the summer of 2014 and continuing into 2015. The material was deemed important for those who attended our December 2012 class near Plattsburgh, New York, the topic of which was "Ritual Purification, Exorcism, and Defensive Magic." Additional materials were covered in our February 2016 seminar held in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, entitled "Pathology of the Sublime." Both seminars were recorded and are available

[3]Donald C. Laycock, *The Complete Enochian Dictionary* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1994) 5.

on the Institute for Hermetic Studies YouTube Channel as five- and three-part audio programs respectively. Additional materials that were distributed or not directly covered during the presentations are included in *Words of My Teachers* (IHS Study Guides, Vol. IV).

There are several issues regarding the role of media and interdimensional beings (and along with it the role of technology—the new "skrying stone" and Ouija Board—in the invisible, giving us "Electronic Voice Phenomena" and spirit photographs) and the neurology of psychic experiences raised in this monograph that I would like to explore in a full-length publication, as well as more information on how to safely enter into communication with the invisible, which we only touch upon.[4] However, until we are able to address these topics in greater depth, the present monograph along with *The Inner Way: The Power of Prayer and Belief in Spiritual Practice* (IHS Study Guides Series, Vol. II), *An Introduction to Enochian Magic* (IHS Monograph Series # 2), and *Mercury's Children: Shamanic and Hermetic Practices* (IHS Monograph Series # 5) will have to do.

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08 May 2016

[4]In this context, though, *Reunions: Visionary Encounters with Departed Loved Ones* by Dr. Raymond Moody (New York: Villard Books, 1993) gives some wonderful indications and advice.

When Spirits begin to speak with man, he must beware that he believes nothing that they say. For nearly everything they say is fabricated by them, and they lie: for if they are permitted to narrate anything, as what heaven is or how things in the heavens are to be understood, they would tell so many lies that a man would be astonished.

— Emanuel Swedenborg
Eighteenth Century
Mystic & Seer

When men become desperate they consult the gods. And when the gods become desperate, they tell lies.

— Tibetan State Oracle
to the
Fourteenth Dalai Lama

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The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.

— John Milton
Paradise Lost[5]

The Strange Case of Don Decker "The Rain Man"

Don Decker was a troubled young man. His problems began as a child when his grandfather, James Kishaugh, started physically abusing him, and would culminate years later with his grandfather's death. On February 24, 1983, Decker was on furlough from the county jail where he was incarcerated for having received stolen property. He was given a few days to spend with his family and to attend Kishaugh's funeral. For some this was a time of mourning,

[5]I.213-14.

but for Decker it was relief. Finally, the man who had abused him since he was a child was gone.

After the funeral, Decker was invited by Bob and Jeannie Keiffer to stay the night at their place. The Keiffers were friends of the family and liked Don. After dinner, Don began to feel uneasy: he was overcome with a sense of fear and fell into what was described as a trance-like state. Decker even claimed to have felt like he was scratched while in the family's bathroom, and exhibited three marks consistent with a scratch of some kind. He stated that he believed his grandfather was attacking him.

Soon afterward, water began dripping from the living room ceiling and walls. They contacted their landlord, Ron Van Why, who came over to examine the apartment. According to Van Why, there are no pipes in the vicinity of the area where the water was occurring—he could not provide an explanation for the apparent leak. The phenomenon began to increase, with water coming up through the floor as well. Van Why contacted his wife and then called the police. It is not certain why he contacted the police, but the officers involved provide some of the most credible testimony to the events that unfolded.

Patrolman Richard Wolbert was the first to arrive, followed a few minutes later by Officer John Baujan. According to reports, Wolbert was "drenched" upon entering the residence. Wolbert stated, "We were standing just inside the front door and saw this droplet of water traveling horizontally. It passed between us and just traveled out into the next room." Baujan would later say, "I literally had a chill going up my spine. It made the hair stand up on your neck. That's how I felt. This was a situation where things were

happening that I never, ever dreamed could possibly happen. And there was no way of explaining what was going on."

Both officers noticed that Don appeared to be in a trance and asked the Keiffers to take him to the pizzeria across the street from where they were. Both officers noticed that as soon as Don left, the water stopped in the house. It soon started raining in the restaurant where Don and the Keiffers were waiting for the officers to arrive.

As the Decker case would unfold, additional phenomena occurred in front of other witnesses: pots and pans banging in the kitchen and Don levitating off the floor. Decker described his levitation: "Then it was like a push. It wasn't like somebody taking their hand and pushing me. It was like feeling it all over your body at once." Soon after this, the Chief of Police arrived, and told the investigating officers it was a plumbing issue, to ignore it and not file a report. Officers Baujan and Wolbert ignored their order and returned the next day to the Keiffer residence with Officer Bill Davies.

Don proceeded to levitate again, and this time it was witnessed by Lt. John Rundle, who states, "All of a sudden, he lifted up off the ground and he flew across the room with the force as though a bus had hit him. There were three claw marks on the side of his neck, which drew blood. I have no answer for it whatsoever."

On the third night, Van Why, the building's owner, contacted Protestant and Catholic clergy in Stroudsburg to come and perform an exorcism or blessing—anything to put an end to the phenomena. He was turned down by all of them. Prayers were started and Don began to convulse and curled into a fetal position. As the praying continued, he began to relax; Ron Van Why stated that the house took

on a "different feeling." The copious effusion of water in the house ceased, only to start again in the prison upon Decker's re-incarceration. Clearly, as Don had begun to suspect at the restaurant on the night it all began, he was at the center of the phenomenon. Don recalls his experiences, "They put me in a maximum security cell. I was there with another inmate. And I was thinking I should make it rain in here. And all of a sudden, water started coming out of the concrete floor, and at that point I thought, 'I can do stuff.' "

The "rainmaking" continued, and in response to the challenge of a guard, Don made it rain in the office of Warden Dave Keenhold. Keenhold was the acting Warden of the Monroe County Correctional Facility, and recalls that he was working alone at around 8:00 PM when he noticed that his "shirt was drooping down." An officer then entered the area and directed Keenhold's attention to the center of his shirt. Keenhold stated, "And right about the center of my sternum, about four inches long, two inches wide, I was just saturated with water." Both Keenhold and the officer were scared. It was then that the Warden called his friend Reverend William Blackburn—who according to an article in the *Pocono Record* (February 5, 2012) was the jail's chaplain—to attend to Decker. Blackburn did not believe that anything supernatural was going on and told Decker to admit that he was concocting the stories.

> All of a sudden his demeanor changed and this smell came into the room. Nurses and doctors, medical people, say when you walk into a room where someone is dying with a cancer or something, usually there's a smell... I smelled a smell like that multiplied five times at least. Evil, foreboding. He

> [Decker] raised his hand and rubbed his fingers together. And all of a sudden, it started to rain... It was a mist. I was in the presence of evil. I opened up the Bible and started to read. But the pages never got wet... I think I was praying more for me than for him. I prayed, and it was only a brief period, and the rain stopped.

With this, Decker's affect changed and, according to reports, the phenomenon never appeared again.

"The Rain Man" case of Don Decker may be one of the most documented cases of unexplained phenomena in modern history. With at least nine credible eye witnesses, the story has attracted considerable attention and was the focus of an episode of *Unsolved Mysteries* broadcast on February 10, 1993. It was also the focus of an episode of *Paranormal Witness*, Season One, Episode Six, which brought it to my attention and, as a result, to the writing of this monograph.

This story and the phenomena reported to have occurred, along with several other philosophical points, indicate a number of important factors:

1. Very few clergy, or even occultists, will ever experience anything like this. The various reports that I have heard regarding evocation in all but a few cases pale in comparison.
2. This then raises the question: for all of our efforts at understanding the nature of Reality, how would any of us respond when faced with such a tremendous force?
3. The next connection is simple: how then does this kind of thing happen? Could the same "rain" that was used to torment people (but failed to fall upon the open

Bible, we are told) also have been used as the "waters of life" to bring physical and spiritual blessing?

4. How is it that, for good or ill, the raw force of emotions is capable of manifesting such acts?
5. What does it mean to be a "demon"? Jewish and Christian lore, and by default most of Western esotericism, says demons are "fallen angels." If we look at what defines them, though, it is their *rage*. In the Indo-Iranian and Tibetan beliefs, one can reincarnate or be reborn in a variety of "forms." A human can become a demon when it is obsessed with hate, or a god when obsessed with power, or an enlightened being when obsessed with or devoted to removing its own suffering and ignorance, and/or that of others. In the Christian creeds we hear of Jesus descending into hell to preach to the "precarious spirits" and redeem them. In Vajrayāna one sends out light rays to all beings in all the realms to remove their suffering. Yet, what is it like to be faced with such raw and unmitigated rage that it can shake the walls of the very building one is in? Who among us could remain calm and remind themselves that it is only a projection of the mind?
6. As I mentioned previously, in some folk traditions, one makes a pact with a being, and it sounds very much like this is what the "grandfather" did in this case, although it is not mentioned. That pact is often passed down along family lines and can cause no undue amount of harm. Modern occultists are quick to dismiss this, as they have never encountered it. I am aware of several people who have; each of their sources had the power to manifest tangible material phenomena.

7. Finally, what then must we cultivate to not only demonstrate such wonderful laws of nature, but to do so in a manner whereby it is a blessing to ourselves and others? (Consider what Decker says about his simply "knowing" he could make it rain.)

Ghosts, Demons, & Poltergeists in Modern Occultism

In relation to the above philosophical points regarding evil, demons, and human suffering as it relates to contemporary esotericism, let me restate that esotericism (as I am using the word) can really be seen as *philosophy*, or *theosophical speculations*, whereas the practical application of this philosophy is *occultism*. The three main legs of Western occultism are astrology, alchemy, and ritual magic, with Kabbalah as the most commonly utilized link between them. While much is said about the various beings one may encounter in occult operations, for the most part the practices are "human-centric," as it is human beings to whom the teachings are addressed and it is humans who are seeking to improve their lives (even if in a limited and relative fashion) through their application. To this end, other beings of the various realms (of which we can safely generalize there are six or seven in number) are often viewed and treated as servants in one form or another.

The most common practice in the medieval literature is to call upon an assortment of angels, demons, and elementals to fulfill the tasks we assign them. Despite this lengthy tradition of trafficking in the invisible, contemporary esoteri-

cism is wonderfully absent in having anything that remotely resembles a comprehensive understanding of our relationship to non-corporeal reality. One finds too many adepts and magi-in-training more concerned with arguing over lineage authenticity, copyright claims, and occult minutiæ than with the simple question: "How do we as humans relate to the invisible?"

The answer is simple, and one you have heard before, but before we get to it let's take a look at some additional issues raised by the television series *Paranormal Witness.*

Of all the six episodes of the television show available to me, each one involved the experience of a haunting. Of all of the hauntings, only three ended because of the active involvement of a third party—be it a chaplain, shaman, or someone with claim to spiritual authority. Several of the remaining cases ceased when the soul of the clearly identified person involved was satisfied. Now this is important: a dead person had their emotional needs met, and the phenomena subsequently ceased. The other cases ended with the involved parties either accepting their situation (with the phenomena continuing in a reduced manner) or leaving the house never to return. In these instances the neighbors, new owners, and others continued to experience the phenomena.

So the question arises: what are the common factors in all of these poltergeist situations, situations that I say appear to go beyond ghosts into the realm of the demonic?

In general we see the following:

1. Children, often adolescent girls, are involved.
2. Women are the initial target.
3. The phenomena increase in intensity as the individuals affected become increasingly emotionally distraught,

confused, angry, and frightened.

4. In general, there is no discussion of a regular and meaningful spiritual life or practice in the lives of the afflicted.

Children and Adolescent Girls

The role of children and adolescence in poltergeist phenomena is well documented. In general, it has to do with the complex interrelationship between emotions and biology. The biological alterations of adolescence create changes in the body that affect how we smell. These subtle changes in body smell are a tangible food for invisible beings. Young women are particularly potent, as their sexual development includes the periodic release of hormone-rich blood each month. In the world of occult practices of ancient times, this was considered an exceptionally powerful ingredient. In Tibetan Buddhism, the trumpet used in *Chöd*, called a *kangling*, seems to have come into Tibet from India where the ideal material source for its construction was the thigh bone of a young girl of the Brahmin class who died unexpectedly. In Tibet, a kangling made from a female bone is preferred to one made from a male bone. That aside, sex is no guarantee of immunity, as the most famous case of demonic possession in the twentieth century—the basis for the novel and movie *The Exorcist*—actually involved an adolescent male.

Women as the Initial Target

This appears to be directly related to their protective role as mother, and the often emotionally charged situation of being in a house as a single mother or in dealing with the problems that arise involving children in general. The more stress that is present, the greater the possibility of generating negative emotions such as anger, fear, frustration, etc.

Phenomena Increase

Again, emotions are the food of psychic and spiritual experiences. Additionally, the role of hormones and their release in the body as a tangible means of interacting with the physical world is often ignored. However, this is part of the reason why particular scents and incenses are used in ritual work. Scent is the quickest way to affect our human psychology and physiology, as it is related to the oldest portion of our brain. The idea that invisible beings can "smell fear" (and feed off of it) is a reality.

Meaningful Spiritual Life

In the end, the most important part is that of all of the cases covered in the series, **none mentioned the victims having a meaningful and regular spiritual practice.** *Some* got out the Bible when things got rough, and *some* even called for help when the situation had reached intolerable levels—but only after there was nowhere else to turn and nothing left to do. So, from the information given, the typical target was college educated, employed, well spoken, and gave

the appearance of being someone who would be a reliable neighbor and friend, but for whom day-to-day life was the over-arching concern. Spirituality was an afterthought, if thought of at all—and when the spirits told them what to do, they did it hoping it would make things better; it inevitably made things worse (a bully is a bully even if it is one you cannot see).

The exception to this is seen where individuals or entire families have very rigid religious beliefs. Here, definitive ideas about good and evil can have a particularly detrimental effect, as they offer no room for psychological mobility. A firm belief in the ever-present power of evil and its desire to derail us from our spiritual path—and the often-accompanying belief in eternal salvation or eternal damnation—can also create a very definite opening for obsession or even possession. Apparently, a belief in the ever-present influence of evil is as destructive to the individual and community as is the denial of anything non-corporeal.

The reason I mention this is because, of late, I have been asked a lot about the role negative beings can have in influencing our lives, even to the point of mental illness and self destruction. According to various spiritual traditions, we are surrounded daily by a host of invisible beings; we rarely sense them and they rarely sense us, as we each have our own world or "frequency" that we live in. We travel between these worlds not simply by choice, but more importantly by the natural law of cause and effect (*karma*)—through our emotions. It is our emotions that define *what* we are. Each of the various levels of consciousness has its own particular emotional quality; as such, we must constantly seek to increase our level of emotional strength by focusing on

love, compassion, and generosity. Positive emotions are the strongest defense against human-ghostly or demonic influence and assault. This does not mean that we should be afraid of such things—on the contrary—but neither should we be in denial about them. When we focus on love, compassion, and expansiveness of an open heart—a heart that opens to all the levels of reality, including negative ones—we create a ground for deep and profound spiritual strength, the kind from which only good can result.

To be very clear about this: contemporary investigations along with extensive cross-cultural research in religious beliefs and spiritual practices affirm that illumination or enlightenment is the apex of psychological integration. Besides this, and logically following from it, we also hear the more rarely stated position: that spiritual oppression or obsession (or worse, possession) is the result of psychological fragmentation and spiritual disintegration. In summary, **psychologically and spiritually healthy people do not get possessed.** While they may experience the presence of hostile beings, actual harm does not and cannot take place. For this reason, the selection of an exorcist within the various traditions is a matter of personal piety and sanctity. This is not always decided according to standards understood by moderns.

> Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed in one self place, for where we are is hell, and where hell is must we ever be.
>
> — Christopher Marlowe
> *Doctor Faustus*[6]

[6] 5.120

In relation to our previous articles on this subject, I was fortunate enough to have an in-depth conversation with well-respected paranormal investigator Mark Keyes of The Pennsylvania Paranormal Association (PPA). The PPA was founded in 2007 by Keyes and his wife Lauren. Keyes and his team members have appeared on several episodes of The Discovery Channel's show *The Haunted.* Keyes is also host of the weekly radio show "Paranormal Science"[7] and author of a book about his experiences in paranormal research: *Chasing Shadows: A Criminal Investigator's Look into the Paranormal.*[8]

In November 2015, the PPA started hosting the East Coast Paracon (ECPC) in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The ECPC is a one-day annual convention of psychics, mediums, and paranormal researchers. As co-founder and leader of the team, I found him to be extremely well-grounded and knowledgeable in his subject matter. He, like every member of his team, is a working professional. Our conversation was really a running event that took place over three weeks, multiple phone calls, and, oddly, incessant interruptions (no less than five disconnects during our final chat) totaling about three-and-a-half hours. He generously provided a wealth of profound information; its importance will be clear to many of you reading this.

What follows is a summary of the key points we discussed, along with my commentary as to their meaning and application.

[7]Broadcast Sunday nights on WILK-FM (103.1).

[8]Stockton, KS: Rowe Publishing, 2014.

Cleanliness Really *is* Next to Godliness...

1. The majority of negative hauntings and possessions they encountered were in either rundown or outright filthy habitations.
2. Drug addiction, alcoholism, sexual impropriety, and physical abuse were often a part of the family dynamic.
3. Most families or individuals had little or no spiritual or religious practice.
4. Many of the clients failed to grasp their role in the problem and simply wanted it to go away.

Again, let us quote Marlowe: "What nourishes me, destroys me."[9]

The role of strong odors, both pleasant and unpleasant, is well known in occult operations. The use of proper combinations of incense, excluding those of a hallucinogenic nature, are taken quite seriously when seeking to bring a spirit into "physical manifestation," and for this reason it should be clear why the beings of the invisible are known as "Creatures of Air" and why odors (along with strong emotions) are their food. This is extremely important to remember, as the purity of the air we breathe is also essential when doing specific breathing exercises. Clean air is good for the psychic channels; stale, stagnant, or outright dirty air is as bad for the psychic channels as it is for physical health.

[9]"Qui nutrit, qui me destruit": the "motto" of Christopher Marlowe, from his presumed portrait (*circa* 1585) discovered at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Thus, our living and ritual environment requires clear, fresh air for basic health of body and mind.

In addition, food, flowers, alcohol, tobacco, or smoke of any kind (including incense), bodily fluids such as sweat, urine, feces, blood, sexual fluids, even human or animal breast milk, are all "food" or energy for the invisible beings we encounter: keep it clean, keep it pleasant, uplifting, and expansive, and the environment a positive one, and not favorable to negative, external influences.

However, from a social point of view, it is also easier to track down raw data regarding which houses, families, neighborhoods, and even entire cities or countries would be the most favorable (read here: opportunistic) target of what we call ghosts and demons. From there, the cycle is ramped up, continues, and when possible, expands.

While it has become unfashionable in modern spirituality to speak of demons and ghosts in anything other than a psychological fashion, esotericists and occultists in particular need to remember that tradition says otherwise. In addition, given the constant media bombardment of violence, irresponsible sex, and (most importantly for those of you reading this) frustration and irritation at others, society, and ultimately oneself—remember that all of this is food for the invisible, and it reduces you and your life to little more than a buffet.

It is important to recognize what is going on in the world around you, but it is more important that you emotionally disconnect from the psychic parasites that the media, and other "well-intended spiritual types" of all flavors, are constantly pushing on you to arouse your righteous indignation at some actual or perceived wrong. Only from a standpoint

of imperturbability can we call upon the inner resources needed to make the most effective decisions in life, be it to help ourselves or others.

So pay attention to your mind and what you're feeding it, and to what it is producing in your life, first in thought, then in emotions, and finally in actions. Only this way can we become more aware of the intelligences around us, and determine whether our relationship with them is a healthy one.

> *Mephistopheles*: Why this is hell, nor am I out of it. Think'st thou that I who saw the face of God, and tasted the eternal joys of Heaven, am not tormented with ten thousand hells, in being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
>
> — Christopher Marlowe
> *Doctor Faustus*[10]

[10] 3.74-78

Better the Devil You Know

Metaphysical and Religious Bias of Modern Exorcists

> Philosophy is odious and obscure; both law and physic are for petty wits... 'Tis magic, magic that hath ravished me.
>
> — Christopher Marlowe
> *Doctor Faustus*[11]

Modern literature on hauntings, ghost hunting, demonic influences, and exorcisms have a definitively cultural and religious bias. While a great deal of material has been continuously generated across the centuries, there are definite and specific cycles of increased interest, mostly of a popular nature. The late 1960s and into the 1970s saw a tremendous uptick in popular literature, as well as other media, that triggered a look at the demonic. Clearly, this is related to two specific events: the counter-culture occult revival focusing around witchcraft with its related paranormal phenomena and the novel and award-winning movie of the same name, *The Exorcist* by Peter Blatty. During the 1980s there was a brief spike in interest in things demonic; this was, however, a result of the so-called "Satanic Panic," a cultural phenomenon worthy of several conspiracy theories, wherein the liberal social work establishment became strange bedfellows with conservative Christians (mainly in law enforcement), and for a period of several years created a fear of everything even remotely "occult." Now, where there is smoke there

[11] 1.107-111

is fire, and the magical and Neo-Pagan communities did little to help their cause, often by denying that evil even exists. Their mantra, "We are not Satanists," also failed to address what these emerging groups actually do believe to an audience steeped in Christianity, primarily Fundamentalist Christian and Roman Catholic dualism. Failure to understand the history of religious movements is also a tremendous error for all concerned. While the "Salem Witch Trials" are often held up as an example of religious bigotry and a crippled legal system steeped in superstition, what is often ignored by many in the modern magical community is that the practice of some form of magic *actually occurred* and was the kindling for the spark of fear present in the community. Whether that "magic" actually worked or not is another story, but witchcraft *was* present. In his book *Strange Powers* (1973), Colin Wilson, eminent authority on the furthest reaches of human nature in both the criminal and divine, relates that

> ...when writing of the curious case of the North Berwick witches, executed in 1591 for raising a storm in which they tried to drown the king, I took it for granted that it was basically a case of hysteria, superstition and credulity. Yet elsewhere in the same book [*The Occult*], I accepted evidence that African witch doctors can summon rain. (To begin with, it had been described to me by two friends who had actually seen it: Negley Farson and Martin Delaney.) It only struck me some time afterward that I was being illogical in *taking it for granted* that the North Berwick witches were innocent. *Some* aspects of the case are very odd. At one point in

> the examination, King James I declared the whole thing was a tissue of nonsense. Whereupon one of the chief accused, Agnes Sampson, drew him aside and whispered in his ear certain words that he had spoken to his bride, Anne of Denmark, on their wedding night when they were alone; no one but the king and his bride knew them. Why would Agnes Sampson have done this, when James was in a mood to dismiss the whole thing as imagination? The account of the case given by Rossell Hope Robbins in his *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* (1959) takes it for granted that all were innocent, and praises the courage of the schoolmaster, John Fian, who confessed after torture, but later withdrew his confession and died asserting his innocence. But Robbins fails to mention the important fact that Fian was the secretary to the Earl of Bothwell—who, in later life, had the reputation of being a dabbler in black magic, and who had every reason to intrigue against his cousin the king.[12]

The point is clear: contemporary occultists are all-too-frequently schizophrenic when it comes to their basic assumptions about the efficacy of occult practices.

It is this dualism that the following commentary seeks to address. Deep, widespread, and nearly impenetrable, this notion of the cosmos being composed of "Good" and "Evil" dominates the modern literature on experiences with the demonic and exorcism. The language used to describe

[12]Colin Wilson, *Strange Powers* (New York: Random House, 1973) 9.

the domain is unequivocal: there is normal human activity and a range of powers limited by physical time and space; there are *supernatural* phenomena which are attributed to saints, angels, and God; and there exist *preternatural* forces, which are always contrary to the will of God and hostile to humanity. Thus, humanity is essentially powerless in every aspect but choice. Humanity can choose to side with good, evil, or neither; beyond that, it is no longer in the hands of the individual. Any ability that transcends time and space is highly suspect, both in its existence and in its source, to the three main monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

All too often, the Roman Catholic Church and its ritual of exorcism is seen as the *only* useful tool in dealing with the demonic. This is in part because of the failure of the mainstream Protestant and even Jewish churches to maintain any sense of metaphysical reality, let alone rituals for addressing that reality. Only recently with the explosive growth of Eastern mysticism and religions in the West have we seen even the hint of other possible methods of dealing with evil. However, here we see an infantile metaphysics at work, even from leaders in the esoteric community, by whom it is often stated that Christian exorcisms cannot work against non-Christian evil! Such statements demonstrate the clear and unmistakable lack of direct experience and understanding of what good and evil are, and what it is that restores balance to the person and community being cleansed. As recently as early 2016, there have been concerns over the effectiveness of the "new version" of the Catholic *Rite of Exorcism*, or part thirteen of the *Rituale Romanum*, as there are material differences between it and the original edition which was

in use from 1614 onward (modestly revised in 1752 under Benedict XIV). These revisions consist mostly of additions in the form of an appendix that is nearly as long as the original publication, thereby leaving the text intact. In 1999 the Vatican issued its revised version of the rite of exorcism under the title *De exorcismis et supplicationibus quibusdam* ("Concerning Exorcisms and Certain Supplications")

However, despite clear doctrinal bias and ignorance of other systems with a long and documented history of dealing with negative forces in the invisible, some of the recent literature produced does have points worth noticing and considering. Among these are the works of M. Scott Peck, M.D., and his mentor Malachi Martin.

In his final book, *Glimpses of the Devil: A Psychiatrist's Personal Accounts of Possession, Exorcism, and Redemption*,[13] Peck gives the detailed accounts of two exorcisms he personally performed with the assistance of a small group of people. One of the exorcisms he considered successful, the other a failure. Peck begins his journey as a liberal agnostic seeking to dispel the notion of the demonic and ends up a baptized Roman Catholic. Peck believes that one must be Christian, and preferably Roman Catholic, to enter into this battle of good and evil. His bias is clear, as are his weaknesses in theology and understanding alternative spirituality. His statement that the "Sleeping Prophet" Edgar Cayce might have been possessed is laughable in that it fails to apply the criteria that Peck himself outlined as defining good and evil. Peck does not distinguish between obsession or oppression and possession, but instead outlines four levels of possession from least to most severe. In addition, Peck's con-

[13]New York: Free Press, 2005.

fusion of Lucifer and Satan, along with other minor details, call his work into question. If it were not for the fact that Peck does have something to offer in our understanding of metaphysical evil—particularly in a publishing environment wherein there are no other contenders from authors with equally impressive credentials—his book would certainly not have made it to bestseller status.

In the text of his work, Peck mentions three points of interest: (1) the age (of the victim) during which possession takes place and why it matters; (2) the length of time it takes to perform an exorcism in general, and (3) a way to address the victim and oppressing entity so as to not drag out the length of time needed to complete a successful exorcism.

Point 1: Age.

Peck believes that possession (using his criteria) can take place at any age, but appears most often in children and adolescents without any additional specifics. The victim of possession tends to stop maturing intellectually and emotionally from that point onwards.

Point 2: Length of Time.

Peck states that a full exorcism usually takes three days, and if it goes longer—such as in the case used as the basis for the novel and movie *The Exorcist*—something has gone wrong. In general, expect it to last three days from start to finish. This is the same in Sino-Tibetan exorcisms. Only rarely is it the case in the West, and if it goes more than three days in the East, chances of survival are thought to decrease as a result of the strain.

Point 3: Addressing Victim & Possessing Entity.
Peck recognizes that he must set the ground rules for communication, and states clearly that he will only speak to either the victim in a healthy state (not being influenced by the entity) OR to the entity directly, but under no circumstances will he address a "sick patient" (that is, a mix of the two, or the entity either influencing the patient or pretending to be them). This is a critical point of control; success or failure rests upon it.

In the Conclusion to *Glimpses of the Devil*, Peck gives thirteen points that are useful to us, and are generally agreed upon by other sources cited above.

- Possession is not an accident.
- The victim must in some way cooperate knowingly or unknowingly in their possession.
- Such cooperation occurs more often than not under duress.
- Possession is a process that takes place over time, unless the victim breaks the agreement.
- The longer it takes for the victim to break the pact, or tacit agreement, the more difficult it becomes to force a break without a full exorcism.
- An exorcism is a therapeutic intervention to liberate, teach, and support the victim in rejecting evil.
- The victim's age at the time of possession can be accurately guessed before the exorcism, but the why and how remain a mystery until its completion.
- The more recent the "time of consent" or agreement to the exorcism, the more likely the ritual will be effective.

- Physical restraints will almost always be required.
- Prior to a full exorcism, at least one effort at "deliverance" through prayer should be attempted, as it will offer valuable diagnostic information even it is not successful.
- A team of at least three people should always be involved, preferably six or more, with detailed legal consent forms being signed prior to the session.
- It is uncertain if exorcism should be performed if the individual has no support system.
- Possession is the most *severe*—but not the *only*—form of demonic affliction.

Desire and participation of the victim or identified patient is critical to the success of the ritual. While it can be carried out if they are fully and completely under the control (not just the *influence*, but the *control*) of a hostile being, they must be addressed and brought to the surface to encourage their hope and desire for liberation.

The last two points made by Peck are important, but I am in full disagreement with the idea that someone is better off left possessed, or nearly so, simply because they have no support system to help them through the recovery period. This again shows a failure on Peck's part to grasp some essential metaphysical realities beyond the standard dualistic view of good and evil, with the hope that "God will know his own" and take care of the person at the time of their death and in the hereafter. Clearly, the possibility of reincarnation, non-collective salvation, and an ambiguous after-life environment are not being considered. The final point, of various forms of negative affliction, along with an alternative to hard Christian metaphysical dualism when

dealing with hostile forces, can be seen in the books *Obsession* (1972) and *The Psyche in Medicine: Possession, Past Lives, Power of Evil in Disease* (1978) by British psychiatrist Arthur Guirdham, M.D., to which we now turn.

Dr. Arthur Guirdham & the Nature of Evil in Human Diseases

Possibly the most important information in the area of poltergeists, obsession, possession, or, more simply put, the "study of evil," does not come from occultists but from a psychiatrist. Dr. Arthur Guirdham (1905-1992) was an English psychiatrist, writer, and novelist who wrote extensively on alternative therapies, including reincarnation and the role of psychic phenomena in mental illness. Despite his working-class background, Guirdham won a scholarship to Oxford, and from there attended Charing Cross (teaching hospital).

Guirdham carefully defines evil not in moralistic terms, but rather in clearly identifiable outcomes.

> This much we can say, that evil is an emanation with a capacity to wither whatever it encounters in its path. It resembles a malevolent *wind* [emphasis added] of incalculable force which achieves majestic acts of destruction, as in the case of tornadoes, or withers the grass by its more surreptitious machinations. Certainly evil is to be regarded as distinctive from sin. The latter may, after all, be an

> infringement of an unchanging and stable ethical or social code. Evil should never be regarded as the summation of sins committed by the sinner. It is possible to be a pillar of society, with a blameless record of things not done and, at the same time, to be a generator and transmitter of evil.[14]

In his book *Obsession*,[15] Dr. Guirdham tells of his own experience with evil as a child and how later in his career this would influence his understanding of human psychology. Guirdham primarily focuses on the following six areas and explains why the psychological theories of his time (and even today, for that matter) are inadequate to the task of recognizing, accurately diagnosing, and treating non-human evil:

- Night terrors
- Sleep walking
- Physical and mental illnesses
- Birth trauma
- Family history
- Environmental conditions
- Psychic contamination
- Cultural and religious predisposition toward psychic disturbances

In his book *The Psyche in Medicine: Possession, Past Lives, Powers of Evil in Disease*, Guirdham turns his attention to neurotic behaviors, depression, psychosis, and

[14] *The Psyche in Medicine: Possession, Past Lives, Powers of Evil in Disease* (St. Helier, Jersey: Neville Spearman, 1978) 37.

[15] London: Spearman, 1972.

physical illnesses or symptoms that are different from their clinical counterparts as the primary examples. Here, the onset of depression is sudden and acute, accompanied by a sense of terror and foreboding. Sudden and radical changes in personality are the result of an obsessing or possessing entity. In many instances the individuals were themselves actively psychic or demonstrated a natural gift of passive mediumship. Individuals prone to seasonal depression (particularly during the Spring and Fall) often were difficult births or delivered by Cesarean. Children with psychic parents are themselves often psychic, and born with infantile eczema. Markings on the skin are common psychosomatic signs of psychic ability as well as stress. This bears a striking resemblance to the idea of "witch marks" as well as the portent of a child being born with a "veil" as indicative of its mystical nature.

Birthdays can be difficult for these people, and the three- to four-week period prior to their anniversary in particular. This is similar to the idea put forth by Harvey Spencer Lewis in his book *Self-Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life*[16] that the month or two prior to our birthday is often when our energies are at their lowest and we are most susceptible to illness, accidents, and general misfortune.

To address these issues, Guirdham, relying upon his own spiritual insight linked to his other research into the domain of reincarnation, recommended wearing specific gems and stones at various times of the year to counter seasonal depression. This is similar to the recommendations of various occult authorities, such as Ficino and Agrippa, who prescribe talismans and amulets for a person based upon their natal

[16]San Jose, CA: Rosicrucian Press (AMORC), 1929.

chart. The same practice is done in Indian, Tibetan, and Chinese esotericism.

An important point that we will return to later is that the emerging "goodness" of a personality in the throes of its "birth" as an individual acts as a magnet for evil. Often a theme for movies and television shows, this is the idea where the person who can make a difference in the world becomes a target prior to their spiritual awakening. Here we see Guirdham stating that there is truth to this idea, from a metaphysical perspective.

One of the most important points made by Guirdham is that while it is easy for us to recognize and experience evil, we rarely recognize when we are experiencing good. The nineteenth century French occultist Éliphas Lévi made a comment similar to this in one of his writings. While Lévi attributed it to the fact that evil is closer to us in day-to-day life, Guirdham gave a more subtle reason: good is by its nature harmonious, whereas evil is by its nature disruptive. It is easier to recognize disruption than smooth sailing—we tend to take it for granted.

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The Geography of Murder

Comments on Peter Levenda's *Sinister Forces* Trilogy

Author and man of mystery Peter Levenda, best known for his connection to (and probable authorship of) "Simon's" *Necronomicon*, a magical book purported to be of Babylonian origin and central to the "Cthulhu Mythos" of H. P. Lovecraft, has written about the peculiar effects geography can have on the mind.

In his discussion of Ashland, Kentucky, and its relation to the murder of one of Charles Manson's uncles, Levenda writes in *Sinister Forces: A Grimoire of American Political Witchcraft, Book One: The Nine*,[17] that it is "the birthplace of Naomi and Wynonna Judd, and Chuck Wollery of *The Love Connection*... I noticed that serial killer Bobby Joe Long came from Kenova, West Virginia, which is a smaller town only a few miles from Ashland, and that serial killer Henry Lee Lucas was born in a Virginia town on the West Virginia border. I wonder what it was about this particular location—this Bermuda Triangle of depravity—that seemed to breed serial killers and mass murders. Was it in the water?"[18]

If we consider the relationship of "Feng Shui" or "wind and water," it may very well be something that is, or is not, "in the water." Levenda points out that in the center of town is a large Indian burial mound, and it "is said that 'Kentucky' is an Indian word that means 'dark and bloody ground.' " As

[17]Walterville, OR: Trine Day, 2005.

[18]Ibid. 80-81.

Levenda most likely knows, this assertion can be attributed to folklore and does not hold up etymologically. However, an interesting fact that Levenda points out is that the first suggested non-Indian name for the region was Transylvania—the Carpathian homeland of vampire legends. He then goes on to invoke the ghosts of Cotton Mather, H. P. Lovecraft, and horror author Shirley Jackson, whose works influenced Stephen King, Neil Gaiman, and Richard Matheson; their unifying theme is the presence of supernatural elements in the environment that influence the human beings who live or travel there.

This idea is nothing new. For as long as human beings have sought solitude for spiritual practice they have also sought to identify both harmful as well as helpful conditions. Out of these studies have grown a body of literature identifying geographic locations with the planets as well as signs of the zodiac according to Western astrology. While primarily used in the Renaissance, and detailed in part in Marsilio Ficino's work *Three Books of Life*, it has for the most part not been in use by esotericists for the last few centuries. The ideas can be seen in various schools of phenomenology, architectural design, and primarily landscape architecture. The same cannot be said about Chinese and Indian methods of *Feng Shui* and *Vastu Shastra*, which have been in constant use since their origin and have maintained their esoteric aspects alongside their more mundane ones. While concerned primarily with architecture and placement, both systems recognize that a structure—be it a grand palace or a simple home—is supported or hindered by the landscape and environment in which it is constructed.

Feng Shui means "wind-water," the primary means by

which the energies of life, or *chi* in Chinese, are transmitted. In Western alchemy this would be "mercury" and in Hermetic Kabbalah, the *pneuma* as understood in ancient Greek medicine, the energies that circulate and support life: *spiritus*. Anaximenes states, "just as our soul (*psyche*), being air (*ær*), holds us together, so do breath (*pneuma*) and air (*ær*) encompass the whole world."[19] Here we see that *ær* and *pneuma* are the same. From this it is easy to understand how and why the use of holy water and anointing with breath became common methods for rites of blessing, healing, and exorcism.

In classical Roman religious practices, the *genius loci* served the same function. Typically the spirit was represented by a snake (like the *nagas* of India, Tibet, or China), a cornucopia, or a bowl for libations known as a *patera*. Libations or offerings of water and wine, or mead and honey, played an important role in classical Greek and Roman religious life, and might be done several times a day by the pious. A "genius" was a guardian spirit of a location, and each region had its guardians organized around the "spirits of the crossroads shrines" (*compitales*) or *lares*. However, individuals could become guardians, such as Augustus Cæsar who transformed into Lares August (*Genius Augusti*). He then became the *genius loci* of the entire Roman Empire. The unspoken reverse of this is true as well: human beings can become active spiritual agents of evil and destruction.

Now, this is a critical point. With such events as, for example, Enoch's transformation into Metatron or the spirits of saints invoked in Christian rituals, the notion of human

[19]Cf. John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1892) 79.

transformation into something divine appears as a continuous theme. It is even present in the United States with the *apotheosis* of George Washington painted on the rotunda of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Painted in 1865 by Greek-Italian painter Constantino Brumidi, George Washington is portrayed as being lifted into the heavens like an ancient hero transforming into a god.

While such ideas may appear quaint to moderns, they have very real meaning and associated practices in many ancient and modern cultures. The notion of commanding the guardians of a given location and bringing them under one's control to act on your behalf is the basis for the Padmasambhava mythos and the origins of Buddhism in Tibet. We also see in the modern controversy around the Dorje Shugden cult of the Gelukpa sect the very real possibility of the disembodied consciousness of an individual being the focal point of the practice. Here, an individual is ritually murdered and elevated to a god-like state to act as guardian of the sect and, in this case, of the state as well. Similar practices are attributed to some Caribbean and African cults.

Taken to its ultimate level, we see the idea not simply of a human being lifted into heaven (Enoch), as the focus of religious practices (*genius loci*), transformed into an archetypal ideal (George Washington), or being an active player in the world from the spiritual realm but under the control of a priestly class (Dorje Shugden; possibly Imhotep), but that of a guardian of an empire or nation (Emperor Augustus; again, Imhotep might fit here as well). Here, a mortal is elevated to the status of embodying what modern schools of occultism call an *egregore*. An egregore for some is a collective thought form or consciousness that has a "leveling" effect on people

within its influence. An egregore can arise spontaneously, through ritual, or by a human being dedicating themselves to forming, influencing, and protecting a chosen ideal at the moment of their death. Instead of a "deathbed curse" we have a "deathbed blessing or dedication." Instead of a ghost that is "earthbound" out of unfulfilled desires, the person becomes an active force on behalf of a greater cause.

Similar statements are made by Guirdham:

> I remember a woman who lived in a pleasant and well-situated road of neat, comfortable houses with well-kept gardens. I never approached this road without apprehension. It consisted of about forty houses. I had patients from twelve of these, an enormous proportion when one considers that the patients were filtered through general practitioners before they came to me and not all the doctors concerned were addicted to psychiatrists. A large proportion of these patients had severe depression. One had made several determined attempts at suicide and had been incarcerated in psychiatric institutions. A man on the same side of the road committed suicide and another had hung himself in the course of the masochistic practices to which he was addicted. In the near neighborhood of this road I also unearthed two poltergeist phenomena. The patient to which I am now referring came from the same side of the same road. She was acutely depressed and had made a suicidal attempt. ...Her good-natured and devoted husband kept insisting that his wife would never be better until she left the house in which they were living. At first I rejected this idea out of

> hand because I had seen too many people pinning false hopes on change of environment when what was required was an amendment of their own attitude.

Guirdham goes on to explain that the house the woman lived in was the one in which "the young masochist had come to grief and next door to that in which the man mentioned above had committed suicide." The husband set forth to find another house and did so with great enthusiasm, only to locate a "charming villa" in which "a patient had died after taking an overdose of barbiturates." From this experience, Guirdham comes to the conclusion that not only can properties be contaminated, but that "people prone to depression are attracted to depressing atmospheres."

This atmospheric evil is also contagious and can affect individuals and entire families for generations. Guirdham states:

> There are disaster houses just as there are disaster families. There are those in which a family, seemingly fortunate before the date on which they enter their new premises, proceed to suffer a positive cataract of disaster. This kind of thing is often dismissed as folklore. What the rationalist refuses to comment on is the regularity with which an epoch of disaster ceases after the family has left such houses. There are also those which, while nothing approximating to tragedy ensues, are constantly changing hands and in which nobody stays very long.

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Obsession, Possession, and Modern Mental Health Systems

While modern medicine and psychology have made tremendous inroads toward understanding mental illness, its causes and cures, there is still room for improvement. One of the primary areas of concern (particularly as we enter into an increasingly multi-cultural state) is the role culture plays in understanding and addressing what are generally called "mental health issues." What the "Rain Man" Case clearly demonstrates is that even in contexts where there is a discussion of "good and evil" or "angels and demons," acceptance of the possible *reality* of such creatures was universally dismissed by all of the clergy involved. Only the prison chaplain—when locked in Don Decker's cell with water gushing forth all around him—accepted that something other than a prank, delusion, or a psychiatric issue was at work. This does not mean that every claim of paranormal phenomena must be taken seriously; rather, we must be aware that in an environment where healthcare workers deal increasingly with deeply entrenched cultural views that are very different from the Western scientific model (a model whose indiscriminate application reduces everything to a form of materialism), they will at some point find themselves dealing with the "demon of the crossroads," so to speak.

While no single model is perfect, and in fact each healthcare professional will have to work out the details for themselves on a case-by-case basis, some efforts have been made to augment traditional mental health practices with modern ones. These traditional practices are often called "shamanism," and include worldviews and cosmologies easily de-

scribed as (at best) "New Age or magical thinking" or (at worst) "superstitious." Modern mental health workers must address the complex subjective reality existing not simply on an individual basis, but on what can be called a truly holistic or even "quantum" level. This quantum level is easily seen in psychosomatic medicine where the patient's attitude and belief system can have tremendous healing effects on the body despite what would be expected based on case studies in which attitude and beliefs are not taken into account.

In the 1970s, efforts were made to integrate Native American practices into the healthcare system on reservations. Similar studies and efforts were made in Puerto Rico where belief in mediums and related practices is very widespread. In Pakistan, efforts have been made to improve relationships and communication with the thousands of traditional healers that attend to the poor across the country. Cultural prejudices, economic conditions, and long-held beliefs mean that mental health concerns are almost exclusively the domain of the shaman, known as a "baba" or "pir." According to an article by Amin A. Muhammad Gadit, published in the *Journal of the Pakistani Medical Association* (Vol. 57, No. 2), in 2007 there were at least 400 shamans in Karachi. In his article, entitled "Could there be a role for Shamans in the health care delivery system of Pakistan?" Gadit concludes that a working shared code of ethics, a registry of verified shamans, and encouraging better understanding and respect for each discipline would allow people to benefit from their traditional relationships to "ethnotherapists."

In the West, and in the United States in particular, many of those people studying shamanism either informally or formally in workshops and various settings often come with

a degree in a mental health care discipline. What many of them lack, however, is support from their colleagues regarding these methodologies as valid therapeutic tools (or the tools are seen as a purely "Jungian"/subjective maneuver). The possible reality of interdimensional beings existing and influencing the life of the patient is radically dismissed, and is often downplayed in shamanic training classes so as not to "scare" students who are paying very large tuition rates to attend. They are viewed from the "safe space" of symbolism or archetypes of the deep unconscious, but never as potentially real independent entities. In the end, if the healthcare field is to be truly holistic and multicultural, it will have to be multidimensional as well; with this, chaplains, crisis workers, and hospice caregivers will need to be trained to knowingly enter into the "mauve zone" that hangs between the visible and invisible worlds.

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Modern Occultists and Variations of Encounters with the Invisible

> Within this circle is Jehovah's name...fear not, Faustus, but be resolute, and try the uttermost magic can perform.
>
> — Christopher Marlowe
> *Doctor Faustus*[20]

For decades, the principal text available to many people in dealing with aberrant and destructive psychic phenomena was *Psychic Self-Defense: A Study in Occult Pathology and Criminality* by Dion Fortune.[21] Since its first publication in 1930, it has been widely quoted as source material for modern practitioners. *Psychic Self-Defense* is the benchmark for many, as there is so little written about the topic from a purely occult perspective. Even here, as we shall see, there is a certain level of religious bias built into the various esoteric systems, with a true and genuine non-dual approach sorely lacking.

A possible exception is William Gray, who authored several books addressing the nature of evil from an occult perspective, including: *The Tree of Evil* (1974) and *Between Good & Evil: Polarities of Power* (1989). *The Tree of Evil* is a discussion of the qlippoth, whereas *Between Good & Evil* is a commentary on the Abramelin Retreat. The final chapter in his book *Magical Ritual Methods*, "Construct or

[20] 3.9,15-16.

[21] London: Rider & Co., 1930.

Destruct," may be the most critical piece needed for putting his ideas together.[22] The philosophy he outlines there is the closest to a genuine non-dualism found in modern Western esoteric schools. Only in the last few years have we seen the term "non-duality" increasingly used in Western spiritual teachings. Gray also provides for those working his Sangreal curriculum a ritual of "Exorcism of Evil" in Chapter 10 of *Sangreal Ceremonies and Rituals.*[23] This ritual does come with a warning, however. Gray was highly respected for his psychic abilities, being described by one of his students as someone who "stank of incense and psychism." He was no fool, nor did he "suffer them gladly," and he warned against rushing into uncontrolled encounters with the invisible.

Mieczyslaw Demetriusz Sudowski (17 August 1897 – 24 December 1971), aka Mouni Sadhu, was the author of several important books on esotericism and spirituality. His chosen pen name "Mouni Sadhu" means "Silent Holy Man" and reflects the profound influence Sri Ramana Maharishi had upon his life. While his biographical information is sketchy, Sadhu states that he was born in Warsaw, Poland. He dedicated himself to the study of Hermeticism from 1926 until 1933, with his studies focusing on the lectures of Gregory Ottonovich Mebes (G. O. Mebes). Mebes, born in Riva, Latvia, in 1868, was a leading member of Freemasonry in Russia and the the founder of an important circle of esotericists in St. Petersburg prior to the Russian Revolution. In 1926, Mebes was arrested along with other members of the school and died in 1930 in a Soviet gulag. In 1912, Mebes

[22]William G. Gray, *Magical Ritual Methods* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1980) 275-301.

[23]York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1986.

had published his lectures in a book entitled *Encyclopedia of the Occult* (currently available in Russian and Portuguese) and it was this book that became the focus of Sadhu's study and practice. In later years it would be the principal source of his own book, *The Tarot.* However, neither the work of Mebes, nor its incarnation in Sadhu's book *The Tarot*, are limited to the tarot cards. Extensive information is provided on the technical aspects of practical magic which appears to be taken from the French schools of the Elus Cohen and Martinism. What may be of interest to students of practical esotericism are Sadhu's references to William James's book *The Varieties of Religious Experience*; additionally, in the Preface to his book *Concentration*, Sadhu gives high praise to William Walker Atkinson (aka Yogi Ramacharaka), stating, "These [books] are perhaps the best of their kind and are unique, filled with practical advice."[24]

Sadhu's *The Tarot* gives some terms that could use resurrecting among both researchers and esotericists to help define the various types of phenomena encountered.[25] The following are found primarily in the French esoteric schools and their offshoots:

AGLA. Used to stop uncontrolled psychic manifestations.

Astrosome. The whole psychic body of a person or being.

[24]Mouni Sadhu, *Concentration: A Guide to Mental Mastery* (Chatsworth, CA: Wilshire Book Co., 1959) 9.

[25]Cf. Mouni Sadhu, *The Tarot: A Contemporary Course of the Quintessence of Hermetic Occultism* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1962).

Cliché. An image or astral imprint.

Egregore. Collective cliché of a group.

Nahash. Astral Serpent, or involutionary force of the astral plane.

Phantom. The nephesch or lower astral in man.

Saint. A highly evolved person who knows no egotistical (selfish) desires, and who can evolve into a Sage, or a perfect Man: a Master.

Tourbillons or Vortexes. Astral creations of force in funnel form, that seek to transfer from the astral to the material world.

While traditional monotheistic religions (primarily Christianity with Roman Catholicism and Fundamentalist Christianity) have focused too much on the nature of evil and have used their power to limit the individual spiritual expression of those in their sway, modern esotericism—including Neo-Paganism, ritual magic (all discussion of demonic evocation to the contrary), and alchemy—is equally guilty of *ignoring* it, going so far as to interpret everything as "psychological projection and fantasy." In this regard, it is essentially no different than contemporary mainstream monotheism: good is marginal, evil is political, and little else than angels, humanity, and demons exist.

Gray attempts to address this notion of the conflict between the visible and the invisible in *Magical Ritual Methods.*

In his typical idiosyncratic style, Gray states:

> It would be a fatal mistake to assume that all Inworlders [non-corporeal beings] are pro-human. They are not. Left to themselves, in their own type of Creation, the anti-humans would do us no particular harm. In fact they are only "anti-us" because our respective Patterns of Creation are incompatible with theirs. Their Patterns are anti-Cosmic, or Chaotic to ours, and capable of disrupting our living quite as much as our Patterns upset theirs. One would suppose under such conditions that a mutual avoidance policy would be best for both sides to adopt, but neither being possessed of Perfect Wisdom, this is unhappily not the case. Moreover, our atomic explosions and radioactive developments in recent years [1969] have seriously weakened the division between the different Dimensions. We can be "got at" much more easily by those Inworlders who scarcely have our true welfare at heart. We also could "get at" them, but how many humans are either capable of it or interested in doing so?
>
> These anti-humans were formerly thought of as Demons, Evil Spirits, wicked fairies, and so forth. People imagined them to be motivated by sheer hostility to the human race, and all beliefs are full of legends and stories concerned with them. Anti-human entities certainly exist, but are not so much activated by hate as by necessity. Their state-structure and ours are inimicable to each other when forced into unnatural contact, and mutual trouble arises from this just as certainly as when sufficient uranium is

put together.[26]

In recent years there has been an increased interest in areas of traditional folk magic that address spirit communication, including Pennsylvania German folk magic or *brauche*, also known as pow-wow (as well as its Appalachian cousin, which includes some Scotch-Irish folklore on occasion), and hoodoo or Southern Conjure magic, which was popular among African-Americans during the early to mid-twentieth century and is now seeing a resurgence.

Since the mid-1960s, Tibetan Buddhism has made considerable inroads in the West—although not always for the best of reasons—with many of the *lamas* maintaining their traditional cosmological views. This includes the Six Classes of Beings of the Ten Directions and the Three Times. As we will see, the view put forth by Tibetan Bön and Vajrayāna, as well as general Central Asian shamanic practices and the position posited by Gray, are in general alignment as to the causes, conditions, and solutions to negative encounters with the invisible worlds.

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[26]Gray, *op. cit.*, 275.

Spiritualism, Channeling, and Unknown Superiors

> Even the late Arthur Ford, grand old mediumistic showman that he was, dismissed the idea that bad vapors might take over an unwary. He told audiences, "When evil, obscene spirits come to you, look into your own heart—that's why they come. You reap what you sow. A good, normal type of person does not become obsessed."
>
> — From *Lily Dale: The True Story of the Town That Talks to the Dead*[27]

As mentioned in the Introduction to this monograph, Spiritualism (later called "channeling" in the second half of the twentieth century) has played a predominant role in the popular as well as scientific understanding of the interaction between the visible and invisible worlds and their inhabitants. Some of this was also a cross-over from the Theosophical Society, founded in New York City on November 17, 1875. The movement's founder, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, was a practicing medium in her youth, and deeply interested in Hermeticism. Her father and grandfather were involved in esoteric Masonry, Martinism, Rosicrucianism, and the related subjects of alchemy, astrology, and Kabbalah. The region of the Russian Empire where she lived as a child was also home to a large community of practicing Tibetan Buddhists of the Gelukpa sect, who had been in the region for several centuries.

[27]Christine Wicker (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003).

A character of renown, Blavatsky failed to gain widespread interest in her studies of Western esotericism and turned her attention to India and the Himalayas. Eventually, the Society's international headquarters were moved to Adyar, India, where they remain to this day. Here, as head of the Theosophical Society, in addition to demonstrating significant psychic abilities on demand, Blavatsky more importantly channeled the wisdom of a secret group of "hidden masters" known as the *Mahatmas*, or Great Souls. These "Mahatmas" would also be known as "The Great White Brotherhood" by many organizations during the twentieth century. The purpose of this group of enlightened beings is to guide humanity on its spiritual journey to awakening. Those with whom they directly communicate are a privileged few; as such, many questions arise about not only the reality of these spiritual "super beings" but also their true identities.

This same idea of unknown masters appearing both physically and non-corporeally would plague the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a British occult organization established in London in 1888. Its authority rested primarily on the belief that it was the chartered branch of a German-based organization whose operating materials were provided by one Fräulein Anna Sprengel. Sprengel, along with one of the Order's founders, William Wynn Westcott, claimed to be in possession of "Cypher Manuscripts" which formed the Order's source teachings, as well as to be in communication with the "Secret Chiefs" of the Order. It is not certain how these communications took place. We have Samuel MacGregor Mathers claiming that he met the Secret Chiefs in person and that he would often experience a headache, dizziness, or nosebleeds as a result. There is also mention of a device

known as the "Ring and Disk" which functioned as a cross between a pendulum and a "Ouija board." Order papers from 1898 state: "Each Th.A.M. [Theoricus Adeptus Minor] shall make, adapt, or consecrate by himself the Ring and Disk of a Theoricus for use in Divination and Consultation. The same Ring and Disk, or similar, is to be worn as a badge of his Grade, suspended from a ribbon of one, or of all the four colours of Malkuth."

Apparently, Aleister Crowley, one of the principle figures in the cataclysmic events of 1900 that led to the breakup of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, worked with and advocated the use of the "Ouija Board" under ritualistic conditions.

> There is, however, a good way of using this instrument to get what you want, and that is to perform the whole operation in a consecrated circle, so that undesirable aliens cannot interfere with it. You should then employ the proper magical invocation in order to get into your circle just the one spirit you want. It is comparatively easy to do this. A few simple instructions are all that is necessary, and I shall be pleased to give these, free of charge, to anyone who cares to apply.[28]

"Spirit Boards" were used by Spiritualist mediums for speaking to the dead as early as 1886. The board was later produced by businessman Elijah Bond in July 1890 by "The Swastika Novelty Company," whose trademark included a

[28] Quoted in J. Edward Cornelius, *Aleister Crowley and the Ouija Board* (Port Townsend, WA: Feral House, 2005) 105.

swastika. Bond also registered and trademarked the word "Nirvana," thereby suggesting an interest in the spiritual milieu of the period. However it was William Fuld, an employee of Bond, who took over production of the boards in 1901 and gave them the name that would make them famous: Ouija. During the First World War, Spiritualist Pearl Curran began using the Ouija board as a tool for divination, resulting in its broader popularization.

Ironically, the Golden Dawn received a great deal of its membership from those who were tired of the dry, non-experiential study provided by the Theosophical Society. They wanted to perform the same feats as Blavatsky and to become adepts themselves. Apparently, either the Mahatmas couldn't make up their minds as to which horse to back or there was a method to their madness that mere mortals could not comprehend. In the end, the organizations which relied upon them became a parody of spirituality and the ideals of brotherhood. Schisms and accusations of deception arose; competing organizations were created. For the Theosophical Society, the first major break occurred in 1895, four years after the death of Blavatsky and twenty years after the founding of the movement. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn would implode in 1900.

Dion Fortune, mentioned in the previous section, was an initiate of the (Rosicrucian Order of the) *Alpha et Omega*, a successor group to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn composed of lodges loyal to Mathers after the 1900 schism. At the time of Fortune's membership, the organization was run by Moina Mathers, the wife of MacGregor-Mathers. Fortune joined in 1919, at which time she began to experiment with trance mediumship. Later she would claim to communi-

cate with "Secret Chiefs" and "Ascended Masters," including Jesus Christ and Comte de St. Germain/Rakoczi.[29]

Is it possible that these Unknown Superiors were not enlightened beings after all? That they were not subjective projections from the subconsciousness of their seekers, but possibly "something other"? We need only look at the manner in which many occultists end their days to deduce some unsettling conclusions. However, even if the Unknown Superiors are real and their messages simply misunderstood, we still must address the point raised by Guirdham: budding personalities are a target for evil. This would explain why so many spiritual organizations—often led by brilliant, insightful, and charismatic (but often unstable) people to start with—implode after a decade or two. Those that do not become the object of what can only be described as a "hostile takeover" by would-be leaders, heirs-apparent, and competing organizations. Between 1990 and 2015 there have been countless efforts to revive old esoteric orders and societies, revitalize current ones, establish new centers for learning, and make the path of self-awakening more established in contemporary society. Nearly all of these have failed, the victims of the weakening and destruction of their members' idealism. This destruction of individual idealism or commitment to the path (and, with it, the willingness to work with and assist others) is more destructive than any failed project

[29]The term "Ascended Masters" is first used by Baird T. Spalding in 1924. Spalding is the author of a series of Theosophy-inspired works published by DeVorss & Co. of questionable quality, uncertain authorship, and (most likely) fiction being passed off as autobiography. At best, Spalding's writings are inspired works; at worst, they are fraudulent, with some possibly being ghostwritten.

and subsequent loss or theft of funds. In short, evil is given a fresh host of psyches to worm into as spirituality becomes seen as a failed ideal or simply an intellectual pursuit.

Cosmological Considerations

Traditionalism, Counter-Initiation, and the Masters of Deception

One of the most important considerations investigators of paranormal phenomena must address is: are we seeing more *phenomena* or are we seeing more *reporting*? This assumes, of course, a certain degree of authenticity in the historical and contemporary data. From the perspective of *Traditionalism*, an esoteric philosophy arising out of the ashes of the early twentieth century, what we are witnessing is a "crack in the wall" that separates the visible from the invisible realms. This "crack" is indicative of what Traditionalism refers to as the approaching end of the Kali Yuga. While many in the New Age Movement and contemporary spirituality see it as a sign of the "Age of Aquarius" or a coming worldwide enlightenment of some sort, Traditionalism looks to ancient Indian cosmology for an explanation.

In Chapter 25 ("Fissures in the Wall") of his last and possibly most influential work, *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times*,[30] French esoteric philosopher and practicing Sufi René Guénon describes the conditions facing humanity. His conclusions are that there is a protective psy-

[30]René Guénon, *Le règne de la quantité et les signes des temps* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945).

chic barrier around the earth that has been under constant attack by invisible forces, described in Islamic literature as "Gog and Magog," who are trying to enter into the physical world. As time accelerates at the end of the current age—the Kali Yuga—the cracks (or "fissures" as he describes them) increase, and the volume of psychic pollution that humanity is exposed to increases. This pollution is visible in not only the degree and intensity of psychic disturbances (and by "psychic" we mean "of a metaphysical nature"), but also in popular culture, as the degradation of popular culture is the hallmark of the Kali Yuga and its degeneracy. Guénon states:

> ...according to all the indications furnished by the traditional doctrines, we have in fact entered upon the last phase of the *Kali-Yuga*, the darkest period of this "dark age," the state of dissolution from which it is impossible to emerge otherwise than by a cataclysm, since it is not a mere readjustment that is necessary at such a stage, but a complete renovation. Disorder and confusion prevail in every domain and have been carried to a point far surpassing all that has been known previously, so that, issuing from the West, they now threaten to invade the whole world; we know full well that their triumph can never be other than apparent and transitory, but such are the proportions which it has reached, that it would appear to be the sign of the gravest of all the crises through which mankind has passed in the course of its present cycle. Have we not arrived at that terrible age, announced in the Sacred Books of India, "when the castes shall be mingled, when even the

> family shall no longer exist"? It is only necessary to look around in order to be convinced that this state is truly that of the world of today, and to see on all sides that profound degeneracy which the Gospel terms "the abomination of desolation." The gravity of the situation cannot be minimized; it should be envisaged such as it is, without optimism but also without pessimism, for as we have already said, the end of the old world will be also the beginning of a new one.[31]

Accompanying these cracks, whereby forces from outside the domain of material life increasingly impact the minds of human beings, is the creation of "false spirituality" and "counter-initiation" aimed at driving humanity into a state of confusion.

> [The] "counter-initiation"...cannot be regarded as a purely human invention, such would in no way be distinguishable...from plain "pseudo-initiation"; in fact it is much more than that, and, in order that it may be really so, it must in a certain sense, so far as actual origin is concerned, proceed from the unique source to which all initiation is attached...but the "counter-initiation" proceeds from that source by a degeneration carried to its extreme limit, and that limit is represented by the "inversion" that

[31] John Herlihy, ed., *The Essential René Guénon: Metaphysics, Tradition, and the Crises of Modernity* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, Inc., 2009) 13.

constitutes "Satanism" properly called.[32]

These false religions, be they the worship of petty ideals, abuse of idealism with utopian fantasies, or misdirection into a culture absorbed with entertainment, politics, or debilitating conspiracy theories, are all the same in their purpose: the distraction and disarming of humanity. For this reason, we must be very careful in our search for truth and remember the words of Jacques Vallée: "Human beings are under the control of a strange force that bends them in absurd ways, forcing them to play a role in a bizarre game of deception."[33]

Jacques Vallée (24 September 1939 –) may offer some of the best information regarding paranormal phenomena. With a Master's Degree in Astrophysics, Vallée began his professional life in 1961 as an astronomer at the Paris Observatory, but would emigrate to the United States in 1962 and begin work with NASA mapping the surface of Mars. In 1967 he received a Ph.D. in computer science and worked on the precursor to the Internet. He has also written over two dozen books, including technical manuals, autobiographical material, and novels. Vallée was the principal consultant for Steven Spielberg's movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and was the inspiration for the French character "Lacombe."

What makes Vallée's research of value to paranormal investigations is that his critiques of "UFOlogy" and the role information and dis-information have played in popular culture also apply to the paranormal. Vallée makes it very clear in his writing that while many things are happening that

[32]René Guénon (trans. Lord Northbourne), *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times* (Hillsdale, NY: Sophia Perennis, 2004) 262.

[33]*Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults* (Berkeley, CA: And/Or Press, 1979) 20.

are not adequately explained or researched, the entire field of study has become a maze of competing agendas and socio-political manipulation. His "multidimensional visitation hypothesis" is also critical to better understanding what may be happening in cases of obsession and possession. The Multidimensional Visitation Hypothesis, or Interdimensional Visitation Hypothesis, states that those who encounter UFOs may not be encountering beings from other planets, but rather beings from other *dimensions.* This means that they could very easily be entities that are, and have been, living "with us," but generally undetected. From this, the study of folklore and various religious scriptures become critical in seeing where possible areas of previous contact, the variety of contacts, and the beings involved may have occurred across human history.

Vallée's positional critique of the more common extraterrestrial origin hypothesis can be found in his paper, "Five Arguments Against the Extraterrestrial Origin of Unidentified Flying Objects":[34]

1. Unexplained close encounters are far more numerous than required for any physical survey of the earth;

2. The humanoid body structure of the alleged "aliens" is not likely to have originated on another planet and is not biologically adapted to space travel;

3. The reported behavior in thousands of abduction reports contradicts the hypothesis of genetic or scientific experimentation on humans by an advanced race;

[34] *Journal of Scientific Exploration* (1990).

4. The extension of the phenomenon throughout recorded human history demonstrates that UFOs are not a contemporary phenomenon; and

5. The apparent ability of UFOs to manipulate space and time suggests radically different and richer alternatives.

In his book *Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults* (1979/2008), Vallée gives "Six Social Consequences" resulting from the belief in UFOs. Again, these same consequences can be equally applied to the study of paranormal phenomena, "channeling," and various attempts to communicate with non-physical realities.

1. **The belief in UFOs widens the gap between the public and scientific institutions.**
   Some day our society will pay the price for the lack of scientific attention given the UFO phenomenon. As more and more sincere witnesses come forward with their stories, only to be summarily rejected by the academic or military institutions they thought they could trust, an increasing gap is created. Not only may the public turn away from science in any form (and become skeptical of the value of its investment in energy research and space technology), but it may seek a substitute in new high-demand philosophies and pseudosciences. This movement towards superstition in turn antagonizes the scientists, who cite it as evidence that the UFO phenomenon should not be studied seriously, and the vicious circle continues.
2. **The contactee propaganda undermines the image of human beings as masters of their own destiny.**

Beginning with the idea of Atlantis and "Chariots of the Gods," and continuing with Biblical interpretations of Yahweh as an extraterrestrial, contactee literature is replete with suggestions that all the great achievements of mankind would have been impossible without celestial intervention. Should we thank our extraterrestrial visitors for teaching us agriculture, the mastery of fire, the wheel, and most of our religious traditions?

3. **Increased attention given to UFO activity promotes the concepts of political unification of this planet.**

   This is perhaps the most commonly reoccurring theme in [Vallée's] entire study of these groups. Through the belief in UFOs, a tremendous yearning for global peace is expressing itself.

4. **Contactee organizations may become the basis of a new "high demand" religion.**

   The current [1979] conservative backlash against "decadent" morality and social liberalism has led many to reconsider their spiritual orientation. The Catholic Church is at a critical point in its history, and many other religions are in trouble. The new churches emphasize high standards and strict disciplines.

5. **Irrational motivations based on faith are spreading hand in hand with the belief in extraterrestrial intervention.**

   As the UFO phenomenon develops unchecked, with no exception that research on its nature will be honestly attempted, a continually growing fraction of the public is becoming convinced that many phenomena are beyond the scope of science and are "unknowable" by rational

processes. If this fraction becomes the majority, they may end society's unquestioned support for rational science. Instead we may soon find an intermediate system of beliefs, in which an almost mystical faith in higher "contacts" blends together with advanced technology in strange hybrid ways. Among contactees, the idea that all attempts at scientific control must be given up and replaced by blind faith is already prevalent.

6. **Contactee philosophies often include belief in higher races and in totalitarian systems that would eliminate democracy.**
From the statement that UFOs have visited us in the past, it is only a small step to saying that their occupants have "known" the Daughters of Man, "and found them fair!" Then some of us may have celestial blood in our veins, which would make them "superior" to others.

■ These six effects of the belief in extraterrestrial intervention indicate that an increase in the social conditioning correlated with the UFO phenomenon may lead to complex changes... It is not only the individual contactee who is manipulated, but the global image in humanity's collective psyche. One would like to know more, then, about the image of humanity such Manipulators harbor in their own minds—and in their hearts. Assuming, of course, that they do have hearts.[35]

[35]Quoted in part from pages 245-248 of the 2008 edition, *op. cit.*

The Role of Media in Psychic Contamination

From Comic Book Censors and Rock & Roll to the Masters of Deception

The breaking down of resistance to psychic and preternatural influences is essential to a successful state of obsession or full-blown possession, and there has been a considerable amount of information over the last fifty or sixty years regarding the influences of mass media and pop culture on human behavior. While we may laugh at the notion put forth in the 1950s that jazz or rock and roll can have negative influences or that comic books incite delinquency, we cannot ignore that where there is smoke there is fire. Since the early calls for censorship of these media (aimed primarily at adolescents), we need only see how the innocent lyrics and horror themes have given way to full-blown obscenity and dubious themes mixing occultism, violence, and sex in both of these media. A simple trip to your local comic book store will demonstrate this fact clearly. A similar trend has occurred in video games and the endless interconnectedness via personal electronic devices. It is not simply that we in the developed countries are willfully exposing ourselves to an unprecedented level of "sex and violence," but that the materials we are being exposed to on an increasing basis frequently involve *meaningless* sex and violence as *entertainment.*

Here we have three factors coming into play: manipulation for commercial gain, manipulation for political gain, manipulation in order to destroy.

The first area, manipulation for commercial gain, has been widely discussed since it was first brought to public attention by Vance Packard (1914-1996) in his book *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957). Packard (born in Grantville Summit, Pennsylvania) attended Pennsylvania State College[36] in 1932 majoring in journalism, and obtained a Master's Degree in Journalism from Columbia University in 1937. He worked for the *Boston Daily Record*, the *Associated Press*, and *Collier's Magazine* until its closing in 1956 allowed him to devote his full attention to writing books.

In *The Hidden Persuaders*, Packard examined the use of psychology, particularly motivational research and depth psychology along with subliminal techniques, to influence the purchasing habits of customers by addressing and promising to fulfill eight compelling needs of the individual. His next book, *The Status Seekers* (1959), addressed American social structures and behavior. *The Waste Makers* (1960) explored the birth of planned obsolescence and its impact on American life. Several of his other titles disclosed the destructive side of corporate conformity, the creation of a highly mobile society in search of greater wealth, and the impact these have on children and family health and well-being. However, one of his most prophetic books may be *The Naked Society* (1964)[37] in which he discusses the threats to privacy that are emerging as a result of the (then primitive) technological development of computerized filing and electronic surveillance methods, and how these can be used to manipulate individual and collective behaviors.

[36] Now Pennsylvania State University.

[37] All titles by Vance Packard were originally published by D. McKay, Co. (New York).

As Colin Wilson has pointed out in his novel (inspired in part by the horror stories of H. P. Lovecraft) *The Mind Parasites* (1967),[38] evil does not need to influence all people all the time, it simply needs to influence the right person at the right time. In the modern world, a media personality is most likely going to be the person on which those cross-hairs are placed. To influence *one* then has the effect of influencing *thousands*, if not millions. We see the same with obsession and possession on the very personal level of family and community. Affect one person—the right person—and the ripple effect will do the rest.

We need only look to Professor Ioan Culianu (1950-1991), echoing the themes of both Packard and Vallée, who experienced the communist totalitarian state firsthand in his native Romania. Regarding the "Manipulator" figure in the context of sixteenth-century magician/mnemonist/spy/etc. Giordano Bruno, Culianu writes:

> The magician has greater possibilities [than those of a psychoanalyst]. ...His techniques, like those of the physician, are equally admissible since, by gaining the social consensus, our manipulator himself dictates the rules of society.
>
> Three hypostases: magician, physician, prophet. They are indissolubly bound together and have no precise line of demarcation. The "psychoanalyst" is also a member of the group, his sphere of action being confined to the illicit and the superhuman. Along with specialization and delimitation of skills, we would tend to say that the two other practition-

[38]Sauk City, WI: Arkham House.

ers of [Giordano] Bruno's magic, the actual magician and the prophet, have now vanished. More probably, however, they have simply been camouflaged in sober and legal guises, the analyst being one of them and, after all, not the most important. Nowadays the magician busies himself with public relations, propaganda, market research, sociological surveys, publicity, information, counter-information and misinformation, censorship, espionage, and even cryptography—a science which in the sixteenth century was a branch of magic. This key figure of our society is simply an extension of Bruno's manipulator, continuing to follow his principles and taking care to give them a technical and impersonal turn of phrase. Historians have been wrong in concluding that magic disappeared with the advent of "quantitative science." The latter has simply substituted itself for a part of magic while extending its dreams and its goals by means of technology. Electricity, rapid transport, radio and television, the airplane, and the computer have merely carried into effect the promises first formulated by magic, resulting from the supernatural processes of the magician: to produce light, to move instantaneously from one point in space to another, to communicate with faraway regions of space, to fly through the air, and to have an infallible memory at one's disposal. Technology, it can be said, is a democratic magic that allows everyone to enjoy the extraordinary capabilities of which the magician used to boast. On the other hand, nothing has replaced magic on its own terrain, that of intersubjective relationships. To the extent they have an operational aspect, sociology, psychol-

> ogy, and applied psychosociology represent, in our time, indirect continuations of magic revived.
>
> What could be hoped for through knowledge of intersubjective relationships? A homogeneous society, ideologically healthy and governable.
>
> Bruno's total manipulator takes upon himself the task of dispensing to subjects a suitable education and religion: "Above all it is necessary to exercise extreme care concerning the place and the way in which someone is educated, has pursued his studies, under which pedagogies, which religion, which cult, with which books and writers. For all of that generates, by itself, and *not by accident*, all the subject's qualities" (*De Magia*, LII). Supervision and selection are the pillars of order. It is not necessary to be endowed with imagination to understand that the function of Bruno's manipulator has been taken into account by the State and that this new "integral magician" has been instructed to produce the necessary ideological instruments with the view of obtaining a uniform society.
>
> Is the Western State, in our time [1987], a true magician, or is it a sorcerer's apprentice who sets in motion dark and uncontrollable forces? That is very hard to say.[39]

"What could be hoped for through knowledge of intersubjective relationships? A homogeneous society, ideologically healthy and governable." To answer this question in more

[39] *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance*, trans. Margaret Cook, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 103-5.

modern terms we need only look at how the individual, as Packard pointed out in 1957, is manipulated into corporate and commercial conformity under the guise of expressing their individuality. The same clearly took place in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. However, the subtlety of the manipulation is seen with a salutation, and not of an outstretched arm in salute, but with a bow, smile, and the Tibetan words, "Tashi Deleg!" in the classical and modern world of Tibetan Buddhism. From the eleventh century until the Chinese invasion in 1950, Tibetan Buddhism was indistinguishable from the State. The state sought total conformity in a variety of "spiritual" as well as secular matters—they were seen as one and the same. While this structure has produced many great spiritual lights, it would be naïve to ignore the radical violence it produced, a very real sectarian violence that peaked during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—producing (as we saw earlier) the Dorje Shugden Cult and its current problems. Conformity and obedience to authority is the rule in Vajrayāna and not the exception, and this is something that neurotic Western converts to Tibetan Buddhism routinely ignore and downplay.

As Vallée has pointed out, we are being forced to play a strange game that "bends" us "in absurd ways...in a bizarre game of deception." The best way to not be deceived is to know the rules of the game—and then *not play it.* "Know thyself, and you will know the gods"—the gods being the archetypes within our own minds as well as the invisible forces of the cosmos. Knowledge of our own being is the best defense from being manipulated by posers from either side of the divide. This will provide us with the best protection from poltergeists, demonic influences, "little green men," or

subliminal messages from your media of choice; the method is all the same: "Know thyself!"

To which we may add that Jean Dubuis, founder of the now defunct French alchemical society The Philosophers of Nature, remarked that much of what we hear about various phenomena is meant to distract us from our Path. Echoing the words of his fellow Frenchman Vallée, Dubuis half-jokingly pointed out that a good banishing ritual might be all that is needed—adding that the thoughtform created of the "space brothers" was *not* our friend. For Dubuis at least, poltergeist, demon, interplanetary being, interdimensional being, or hidden agenda, it was all the same: *send them packing.*

Summary

- Historically, communication with non-corporeal beings has been fraught with inconsistency, misunderstanding, and deception. Deception by the intelligences is the rule rather than the exception.

- Don Decker, the focal point of the "Rain Man" case which took place in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1983, claimed that the phenomena was a result of psychic attack by his dead grandfather. The phenomena consisted of witnessed levitation, scratches from an unidentifiable source on Decker's body, and the spontaneous formation of rain inside the residence where Decker was staying, as well as at a restaurant nearby and in the county prison.

- Leaders of various occult orders have looked upon spiritual communications as a sign of their authority, and yet many of the organizations they have founded collapsed in less than a generation.

- Much of the information that we have regarding obsession and possession comes from a narrow range of psychological sources willing to consider the possibility of the reality of the phenomena.

- Obsession is often preliminary to possession and can be neutralized through therapy and spiritual intervention. The belief structures of the people involved play a large role in who will experience obsession or possession and the possible outcomes.

- Contemporary investigators are often very narrow in their considerations, with a dualistic view focused around a heavily Christian model with the Roman Ritual being the main tool as the norm.

- Traditionalism views the current mass interest in the paranormal as a sign of what is called "the crack in the wall" and as the culmination of the Indo-Tibetan notion of cycles and the Kali Yuga.

- The history and topography of a location play a significant role in the formation of the psychic environment that makes obsession and possession likely.

- There are strong parallels between the investigation of paranormal phenomena and Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs). The social implications of both are significant.

- The possibility that UFOs are not from distant civilizations but exist interdimensionally is more disturbing for many researchers than the more material explanation.

- Manipulation by the invisible—be it defined as spiritual, interdimensional, or extraterrestrial—must also be considered, along with the manipulation of society by those who collect its data-output. Various agendas are at work, and what exactly is being dealt with, its purpose, and its impact on society must always be considered.

- No case can be seen as a stand-alone event, as each event is part of the greater whole. It has an impact on those involved and the greater culture.

Appendix A

Level One Burning Meditation

On June 19, 2014, I delivered a presentation at the Fifth Annual Conference for the Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE), held at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York. My presentation was entitled "Israel Regardie and the Theory and Practice of the Middle Pillar Exercise" and was a case study in the use of the Middle Pillar Exercise as a therapeutic tool. The subject was an adolescent male demonstrating symptoms of acute and transient psychosis. A strange and peculiar history of visionary experiences was part of the family history, and while a variety of possible causes were recognized for the young man's mental state, paranormal influences were neither specifically identified nor ruled out. The fundamental basis for treatment was that energetic disruptions in the mind-body complex are the source of illness: restore the balance and health will be restored. The Middle Pillar Exercise was used as part of the program to increase psychosomatic harmony, and proved successful.

The Middle Pillar Exercise was made particularly famous by Dr. Francis Israel Regardie, a chiropractor, Freudian ana-

lyst, and Reichian therapist. He assisted soldiers with what is now called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder during and after the Second World War. His book, *The Middle Pillar: A Co-Relation of the Principles of Analytical Psychology and the Elementary Techniques of Magic*, was first published in 1938 and has been in print continuously ever since. The Middle Pillar is a particular practice, similar to Indian, Tibetan, or Chinese yogas, wherein specific visualizations and vocalizations are performed. While not everyone may find the practice to their liking, either for philosophical or personal reasons, it is important that an understanding of the influence of visualization and meditation on physical and mental health be developed by anyone in the healthcare fields.

Not all practices are as lengthy or tradition-specific as the Middle Pillar Ritual. For this reason, we have provided readers with the following practice which will give them the opportunity to have a ready tool at their disposal for daily use in rebalancing their energies, calming their mind, and clearing themselves of any psychic parasites they may have encountered during the day. It is best done in the evening before or around sunset, but can in fact be done any time and anywhere. It can also be done before or after any encounter with an emotionally unsettling situation, used by psychic investigators, and even given to clients as part of a parapsychic intervention or healthcare regimen.

The following meditation is from Brian Osborne, LAC, of An Shen Acupuncture (Plattsburgh, New York). Dr. Osborne has extensive experience in Taoism, Shamanism, and Hermeticism, and has used the following meditation regularly as part of his practice and that of his students.

Students familiar with Nei Kung, Chi Gong, and the Tibetan practice of tonglin will notice similarities. This practice should be done immediately after any encounter with the "invisible"—even when there is no feeling of unease—or simply daily (ideally in the evening) to keep one's energies clear, clean, and healthy.[40]

- Items Needed:
  - Red candle
  - Frankincense (and suitable incense burner)
  - Optional: alarm clock or timer

1. Sit with feet flat on the floor, legs and ankles uncrossed. Your back is straight (a curve inside). You may use the back of a chair for support, but don't recline.
2. Light the candle. Look at the candle flame for a few minutes and shift to get comfortable. Perform some deep rhythmic breathing to further calm yourself.
3. Close your eyes. Take the chair, candle, even the strip of floor between you and the candle to a beach, or a cliff above a beach. It should be a place you know, or if it is somewhere imaginary, always go to the same place.

[40]For more information on candle meditations in psychic awareness see Mark Stavish, *How to Develop Your Psychic Abilities* (IHS Monograph Series # 4). Additional practices for psychic and physical purification and regeneration can be found in the same author's *Kabbalah for Health and Wellness* and *Child of the Sun: Psychic and Physical Rejuvenation in Alchemy and Qabala* (IHS Study Guide Series, Vol. III).

4. Now you are at your beach staring at the candle. Start to relax your body. Give the body a command to relax starting with the big toe on your left foot. Then progress to the rest of the toes, foot, ankle, leg...so on up the body to the left shoulder telling each place to relax. When you get to the shoulder progress down the left arm to the hand telling each place to relax, then back up the arm to the neck and then to the head and face. At this point half of your body should be relaxed. It should feel long and smooth on the left and kind of tight and "wrinkled" on the right. Then go to the right side working down exactly the same way in reverse: start with the right side of your face and finish with the right big toe. All of this is being done while on the beach looking at the candle.
5. Visualize two roots coming out of the bottoms of your feet, growing down into the earth. As they grow down they pass through normal earth, then they pass through **red** "lava," then they plunge into **yellow** "lava." They converge into a "V" about 15 feet below the surface. Now with each inhaled breath draw up the yellow "lava" through the roots into the sacrum area. On each exhaled breath the lava moves up the spine and out the top of the head like a yellow "laser." It goes up and infinitely out of sight into the cosmos. Do this for 9 breaths.
6. Envision a small white cloud in the distant blue sky. Call the cloud to you and have it enter your body through the left side. Envision the cloud acting as a pre-cleanse, soaking up dark particles of stress and mental fatigue from inside your body. You can have

it agitate within you like a washing machine. When you are ready, have the cloud exit through your right side taking with it the dark stress and mental fatigue it has acquired. The cloud will appear grey or darker. Send the cloud back up to the sky. You can burn the cloud there with a red flame or send it all the way to the sun to be incinerated.

7. Still looking at the candle flame, visualize a halo around your head. See it, make it increasingly vivid, a bright sparkling yellow color. On inhalation, breathe in the yellow light from the halo: in through the nose and let it travel down through the body to the feet. The light fills you from the bottom up; with each breath the yellow light fills more of your legs, then your torso, arms, and finally your head. When you are completely filled with the yellow light, you still continue to inhale it. As you do, it becomes more dense, more "pressurized." The light will start to push black or dark brown "sludge"/"dirt" from the pores of your skin. As this comes out, you then visualize a red flame which covers your body from head to toe and **burns** the black sludge away. Continue this inhalation of yellow light; it pushes out the sludge, then red flame burns the sludge away.
8. When you are finished "burning," or if time runs out (alarm goes off), visualize yourself coming back to the room where you started and slowly open your eyes.
9. **Slowly**, shift your position, stretch **gently** and **breathe**. Move slowly for the next few minutes. Any cloudiness or disorientation will go away quickly.

Some Closing Thoughts from the Editor

What is wonderful about the "world of spirits" is exactly what we hate about it: uncertainty in nearly every respect. Most people who get involved in occultism (as opposed to those lucky [?] few of us for whom it "entered our soul early"—or who were dragged kicking and screaming into the pit of it!) are interested in an excursion, a distraction, a "fun" night out, maybe even something a little "spooky"... To receive, in exchange, a horror or a haunting can ruin the whole party.

And so many leave, to return not again...(?) In the time before that happens, though, we want to find fulfillment in life and we want to have direct experience of those "powers and forces" that lie beyond the ken of all those "average mortals" out there (*certainly* not "you and I," of course!). Diving in to do a little spellwork or ritual does its "quick magic" right off the bat, driving out the demon of Boredom and leaving us with something to talk about with our friends and hint about to our enemies, at minimum.

We must understand, however, that *every action produces a reaction*, whether we are aware of it or not.

Kenneth Grant discusses (and coins the term for) the notion of "tangential tantra" in his "Typhonian Trilogies."[41] What happens is this: you set out to do one thing, and you end up getting not only "more than you bargained for" but, indeed, interesting "tangential" phenomena, as well. Indeed, *no intentional act can fail to generate a result*, but the result may not be in *any* way the one you anticipated. If we are sufficiently focused and determined in our ritual work to be able to obtain even a fraction of our intended result, we have unwittingly also placed a substantial stress and strain on the structures that maintain our experience of reality.

Now, what happens when you push *really hard* on a window or door (whether locked or not)? If you persist, and magnify your efforts as necessary, it opens, of course.

And sometimes, depending on the ratio of force applied to quality of materials and geometry of patient, you can "crack" the structure that holds the door itself. You didn't *mean* to do it—it just happened, as a natural result of your efforts.

And sometimes, if there is something on the other side of that crack that wouldn't mind a vacation from its usual gloomy retreat, you will encounter a *monster* (something "revealed").

Monsters have their place, just like the neighbor's dog or the child's toys. What we want to know is this: should we attend to them or not?

Consider the case of the "revealed" text. Not to engage in undue *ad hominem* attacks, but no matter *what* text(s)

[41] See, specifically, *Hecate's Fountain* (London: Skoob Books, 1992) for a full elaboration of this idea, which I have severely delimited in the present context.

you focus on, I implore you to *attend to your best interests* in any given scenario, and to apply the "banishing ritual of the middle finger" (to use an apt phrase from an adept of the "chaos magic" school) in all cases where an entity tries to convince you to do otherwise.

This should be obvious. But the contents of the preceding text should have convinced you that it is *not* obvious to *enough* people.

Despite the usual "space brothers" nonsense that flows through so many "received" texts, there do exist handfuls of genuine articles which might serve us in some way—*but only if we know how to read them.* Now, *why* would a spiritual agency that *really* sought to "help us out" provide valuable treasures and insight to us either *camouflaged* or *cloaked in the repulsive*?

It doesn't require a "spiritual intelligence" to do this, of course. Plenty of humans do it all the time; people have their clubs and inside jokes and "secret handshakes," etc. Not to mention the "ignotum per ignotius" (explaining the obscure by the more obscure) of our friendly medieval alchemists. So why do *humans* do this? Sometimes they do it to make something *special*, to provide meaning to interactions that will reassure those "in the know" that they really *are* "in the club."

But that's not enough; more importantly for our purposes: *the text itself will render its meaning clear only to those with the patience and intelligence necessary to use it in the proper context.* When something "doesn't make sense," only those willing to be purified in the Fire of their own *desire for the goal* can make of themselves a fit receptacle of its meaning. This requires time, energy, and money spent in the pursuit

of understanding; it requires *sacrifice* on the part of the Operator to get to the heart of it.

Could there be another reason?

Yes. But that way lies the Qlippoth...

To add to the discussion of *possession* in the preceding text, one scenario includes the possibility that these written "qabalahs" are quite literally the functional genetic material of their spiritual parent: received texts are like viral code, downloaded into the brain by simply reading them, at which point they become "the Living Word," and subsequently mutate their host according to the prime directive of their source. In a sense, alien DNA is "etheric content" that travels freely as code, across illimitable gulfs of space.[42] The words themselves are the entity's spirit; for those readers familiar with such "modern tantras" as *Liber AL vel Legis* (Aleister Crowley's "Book of the Law"), this may explain why the "study of AL is forbidden" and such an action is considered to generate "centres of pestilence."[43] (For those of you not familiar with these references, don't worry about it.) On a lighter note, it could also explain *precisely* why reading the words of a holy text (such as the *Bhagavad Gita* or Christian Bible) is considered to confer "blessing" and divine protection.

There may be trans-temporal phenomena occurring—the brain doing its work as a "time machine," generating "wormholes" according to the code, by which the entity's

[42] Apologies for the turn of phrase, but not getting Lovecraftian when it's necessary is just no fun!

[43] Something Kenneth Grant considered to be "proof of success" (*Hecate's Fountain* 116), a veiled reference to AL's "success will be your proof."

substance is conveyed and reified. Depending upon the level of attention given it subsequently, the "Word" becomes capable of working its Will through the given host in the physical world.[44]

Outside of all this potential science fiction, what do you do if your attention is drawn to one of these insidious books?

Test the claims. If the "revelations" you are receiving from your analysis of a spiritual text are not capable of being *tested in Malkuth*—or if they *are*, but they don't yield anything of value—then you may safely reject them. Seriously.[45]

That leads me to another point that should be obvious: just because it's invisible doesn't mean it's special (or even important). Again: what criteria should we use in "testing" spiritual creatures? *Simple* criteria: does this help me? If yes, then good. Now: does this *hurt* anyone else? If yes, then *bad.*

It is okay to simply *ignore* spirits, ghosts, demons, or whatever if they are boring or suggesting criminal behaviors. The reason why most people end up selling their Ouija boards to the next batch of adolescent thrill-seekers is because *the inhabitants of the invisible world do NOT vastly differ in*

[44]Cf. Philip K. Dick's notion (as given in the *Tractates: Cryptica Scriptura*) of the Spirit of the Living God resurrecting via the physical rediscovery of the Nag Hammadi codices: "As living information, the plasmate travels up the optic nerve of a human to the pineal body. It uses the human brain as a female host in which to replicate itself into its active form. This is an interspecies symbiosis" (*VALIS* [New York: Vintage Books, 1981] 232).

[45]Please refer to the discussion of the "power of suggestion" given by Mark Stavish in *The Inner Way* (IHS Study Guide Series, Vol. II) for more on the mechanics of these procedures.

terms of personality from those of the visible world. In other words: you find a lot more "John Does" than "John *Dees*" both here *and* there!

Speaking of which, here is an example of what I mean: once, my wife and I used the Ouija board to contact her dead aunt. This we "succeeded" in doing, receiving some reasonably convincing responses that we later double-checked for accuracy. They were *pretty* accurate—again, there was some general weirdness involved in the responses, e.g.: why give us the name of a *suburb* of the town *very close to* a specific residence during a certain period of time? (This is all explainable, of course, but I think you get my drift—especially if you've ever held a "séance" of this sort.) Now, being my typical curmudgeonly self, I insisted that "she" provide us with winning lottery numbers for a specific date, etc., etc. (I was particularly thorough in my demands.) "She" provided us with exact numbers; after the session, I immediately went to the nearest convenience store and purchased a lottery ticket with exactly those numbers.

Did I win?

You wouldn't be reading this right now if I had. (To be fair, you *might* still be reading this...but I wouldn't sound *nearly* so sure of myself!)

Again, as I was deeply unsatisfied with this result—and being my typical curmudgeonly self—I requested another session with the "dead aunt" and gave "her" a *thorough lashing*, telling "her" that if she *ever* purported to do such a thing again, *I would find or make a way to REALLY "end" her!!!*

The communications ceased abruptly. I have had numerous interactions (in one way or another) with invisible

entities since then, and received various levels of information that ended up bearing itself out (the present series of books published with Mark Stavish are one example of a relevant communication). However, a follow-up with one particular "spirit" was interesting: when asked the burning question (for winning lottery numbers), it immediately went to "Good-Bye"!

(Yes, it appears my reputation now precedes me...!)

The moral so far: if the spirits can't increase your earning power—in one way or another—then *drop them*; and if they *can*, you must ask yourself the question: what is it *costing you?* Rest assured that "something for nothing" can be found *nowhere in all the world.* Don't bother with that absurdity. Just pay the price for what you want and be done with it.

YOU are the source and medium of ALL power. It sounds nice, and it *is* nice—and it's *true* as well. I emphasize this point only to ensure that you understand what demonic agencies wish for you to forget: *you don't need them.* That doesn't mean you won't have to *deal* with them—especially in "this line of work"! But it *does* mean that *if you give them an inch*, be prepared to do some *major* clean-up work at some time in the future.

We might consider in this context the *yidam* of Tibetan magic.[46] This is an entity that is evoked via exacting ritual procedure whenever a student's incarnate guru has exhausted their lesson plan. So after months or years of complex visualizations and other procedures, the student is at last beset with the Presence of the Yidam, who proceeds to continue

[46]There is a great introduction to this topic in J. H. Brennan's *Tibetan Magic & Mysticism* (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2006) 37-42.

where the incarnate guru left off. (It may be profitable to note the easy connection here with the Western magician's "Holy Guardian Angel"...)

But what ultimately happens? From whence do the yidam's lessons derive? If it demonstrates magnificent powers, how did it obtain these? Indeed, *where did the yidam come from?*

(I will pause here for the realization to set in. And if you already "got it"—*get it again!*)

I hope it's obvious by this point that our experiences are ultimately *ours.* No one and no thing can "make" us react in any particular way unless we *allow* it to. So let that be your first defense against the dark arts: *I will ignore all attempts to dissuade me from my highest good and greatest happiness.* Literally just *ignore* them! (Yes, this will irritate a lot of people. Consider that, for a moment: do you want to be "friends" with people who are angered by your pursuit of happiness?!?) Don't walk around *talking* about this, by the way; that's quite to the contrary of the entire point. The more you talk about "ignoring this or that," the less of it you are *doing.* Instead, get back to the point: what do *you* want to do with your life? Do that. And *anything* that attempts to dissuade you from it *is to be ignored.*

A GREAT SECRET FROM THE EMERALD TABLET

This "ignoring" of evil (yes, that which tries to turn you from goodness is evil—it's easy!) may not always be so straightforward in practice. There will also be times when

you *must* deal with distasteful phenomena. In these cases, what do you do?

I have a principle that is effective by definition: *suffering is the opposite of FOCUS.*

Say it again to yourself: "suffering is the opposite of FOCUS." How to apply this?

If you find yourself in a situation that you don't like (and, we're assuming, you "must" be there in order to get to some point that furthers you in the achievement of your goals), *let your focus become microscopic.* Usually, you will hear people say "be in the moment." I've never liked this platitude because I don't know what it means: "I *am* in 'this' moment—that's why I'm suffering!!!"

Instead of trying to do something impossible or force yourself to perform an action that you don't understand the mechanics of, do something that you *know* how to do: keep "minimizing" your area of attention/awareness until you have *shut out* all offending phenomena. If you happen to notice something "still there," at the edge of your perceptive faculties, then you simply haven't gone far enough. Down, down, to the book, the chapter, the page, the paragraph, the line, the word... Or whatever you choose to focus on.

The corollary of this can, unfortunately, require just as much practice to pull off easily, but it is just as important: when circumstances are "just what we want," we can "loosen" our focus and *de-magnify* until we have *relaxed* into the context that we enjoy—indeed, becoming *part* of the joy that flows throughout the context.

— Alfred DeStefano III
The Mauve Zone

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